
THE
SECRET HISTORY
OF THE
ARMED NEUTRALITY.



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THE
SECRET HISTORY
OF THE
ARMED NEUTRALITY.

TOGETHER WITH
MEMOIRS, OFFICIAL LETTERS & STATE-PAPERS,
ILLUSTRATIVE OF
THAT CELEBRATED CONFEDERACY:
NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

Written originally in French
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TRANSLATED BY A***** H****.

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PREFACE.

ALTHOUGH the memory of the late war, in which Britain was engaged with its American Colonies, and the Houses of Bourbon, has been considerably effaced by the succeeding revolutions of Europe,—and though the violence of party-spirit, which those hostilities produced, has greatly subsided, or been directed to objects more immediately under view,—yet, as that war will form a grand epoch in the British annals to latest posterity,—so an authentic detail of events that took their rise in that contest, and were chiefly influential in determining the fate of the contending parties, will ever merit a considerable degree of the public attention.—The following Memoirs are important, whether we consider them as authentic materials for historical details, or

as affording a display of the secret motives that actuated the Neutral Powers in their conduct towards Britain—a conduct ungenerous in the highest degree, at a period when the most powerful States in Europe had already combined to depress, if not annihilate, the grandeur of that nation.

FAR from being one of those mercenary publications with which the world is daily infested, the present work is, on the contrary, to be considered as a valuable present made to the Public, and well deserving the thanks of this nation in particular. It contains a circumstantial account of the causes which gave rise to a system dangerous in the extreme to the British interest, and is written by a Nobleman of most respectable character, now retired from the political stage, where he lately acted a very considerable part. It is founded on facts to which he himself

was

was witness ; and it is easy to see, by the manner he treats his subject, that he is a man free from party-spirit and partiality, as every historian ought to be. This Memoir is only part of a larger collection, consisting of several volumes, intended to be printed in the original French on the Continent ; a present which the author was pleased to make the Library of the Scots at Ratisbon. The indulgent reader will please remember, that the following is a translation, and a translation made abroad ; but the delay necessary for revising it would have prevented its appearing at the same time with the original edition now going to the press in Germany.

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HISTORY

THE SECRET HISTORY
OF THE
ARMED NEUTRALITY.

THE ARMED NEUTRALITY, or the various and numerous treaties, which, under the name and pretence of “ Maritime Conventions for the protection of Neutral Navigation and Commerce,” were concluded during the late war, which Great Britain had to carry on against its American Colonies, the combined powers of France and Spain, and, last of all, against Holland, is one of those singular events, to the nature of which, not only the public, but even most of the Courts, seem to have been entire strangers, and are still to be considered as such, at least as to its true author, and the circumstances that paved the way for a plan and system so unfavourable to the interest of the British court.

A.

THE

The leading and almost generally adopted opinion, both by the public, and also in the cabinets, was, that it owed its existence to the great Frederic of Prussia :---that he had first of all concerted the plan, and afterwards communicated his ideas to the Russian ministry, and in particular to Count Panin, a minister who was then generally, though perhaps not justly, believed to be entirely attached to the Prussian interest* : And the

* This opinion with regard to Count Panin, whose ministry forms one of the most brilliant and glorious periods in the Russian annals, was so general, that not only all Petersburg, but also a great many Cabinets, and perhaps the very Empress herself, looked on him as a person entirely dependent upon the King of Prussia, and actuated merely by that monarch's impulse: while nothing can be more certain, than that Count Panin had views of his own, and was very often apt to believe that he had himself some influence on the king of Prussia. His great attachment to the Prussian alliance is very easy to be accounted for, as his entry into the Russian ministry was signalized by the treaty of alliance between Catharine II. and Frederic II. : And it is too remarkable to be passed over in silence, that the last of his ministerial functions was the signing of the Convention and
accession

the chief reason for that great monarch's taking such a step, was thought to be nothing else but an old grudge, and a desire of revenging himself on the British ministry, for abandoning him in the year 1762, by making a separate peace with France: an idea which was unworthy that Prince's political principles, and the greatness of his soul. We have good reason to suppose, that the Court of Great Britain was led into the same erroneous opinion by Sir James Harris, now Lord Malmesbury, and then British plenipotentiary at Petersburg; whether it was, that Sir James himself was mistaken, or, that his eagerness for detaching Russia from Prussia, and engaging the former into an alliance with Austria, which England had then some hopes of joining, carried him so far as to imagine he would find his interest in charging the King of Prussia with being the author of this system: and, indeed, upon due reflection, it will appear less singular, and e-

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accession of Prussia to the Armed Neutrality, the 27th of April and 8th of May 1781.

ven very natural, that this opinion should gain so much credit, if we consider that Frederic, having raised his name to the highest pitch of glory, all Europe, astonished at the greatness of his exploits, and the superiority of his genius, seemed disposed to look upon him as the grand source of all political events and intrigues. As a further proof how deeply this opinion must have been rooted, and that even length of time has not altered it, we shall only add, that, in a late parliamentary debate, during the month of April of the last year (1791) on the preparations that were carrying on for compelling Russia to sign the peace with the Turks, on the basis of a strict *statu quo*, the opposition, and in particular a late minister, Mr Fox, openly charged the King of Prussia with having given Russia the first idea of the Armed Neutrality.

IN order, therefore, to prevent this historical, as well as political error, from being handed down to posterity, the author of the present Memoir, who had frequent opportunities

tunities of hearing, from the mouth of an unexceptionable person at Petersburg, the particulars of this whole transaction ;---who was even actually at Petersburg at that juncture which gave rise to the Armed Neutrality ;--and who, by the means of his situation and office, was enabled to discover the most secret springs of the great political machine,—flatters himself he will render the public an agreeable service, by presenting it with some memoirs and acts concerning the Armed Neutrality, together with his own reflections on its origin, and the steps that were taken for bringing it to perfection. It is undoubtedly one of the most singular phœnomena recorded in history ; and, when considered in its proper light, will serve as a constant warning to every one employed in negotiations, shewing what a dangerous thing it may prove for a man, to rely too much on the force and superiority of his own genius, and to think himself capable of bringing events about by swerving from the obvious and natural course ;---to give himself up to intrigue, and violent measures, for gain-
ing

ing his aim;—to trust too much to appearances;—to break through all formalities that are once established at a court;—and, lastly, how difficult it is for the ablest and most active minister, such as Sir James shewed himself to be, both then, and afterwards in Holland, to carry his point, when he finds himself opposed by a whole ministry, even when the person who is considered as its soul, is already upon the decline of his credit.

THE fact is, that this Armed Neutrality, which gave so much umbrage to the Court of London, and was the cause of so many conventions, that were signed for the support of free navigation, between the several courts of Denmark, Sweden, Holland, Prussia, Vienna, Lisbon, and Naples, on one side; and that power of Europe, Russia, on the other, which, of all the contracting maritime powers, had by far the least number of merchant ships:—this celebrated confederacy, I say, was devised by no other person than Count PANIN, the Russian minister, and that merely

ly to ruin Sir James Harris, at a crisis when the British minister had every reason, and all possible authority, (Count Panin's alone excepted, who was long an entire stranger to all his transactions) to think Russia upon the point of joining Britain in its contest with America, and with the Houses of Bourbon, and of entering into an alliance for their mutual defence, which, as it may appear to have something of a riddle in it, I shall endeavour to place in a clearer light.

The Court of St James's having, immediately after the treaty of Versailles, in 1762, renounced all further connection with the Continent, saw itself, upon the breaking out of the late war with the American Colonies and the Houses of Bourbon, deprived of every friendly support, and the dangerous situation it was in, shewed the absolute necessity of procuring an ally : for which purpose, the Courts of Vienna and Petersburg were singled out : but as both these Courts were allied, the former with France and the latter with Prussia, these

these alliances were first to be broken, before there was any probability of succeeding.

THIS was the great object of Sir James's mission: But, to detach Russia from its alliance with Prussia; to draw it into another with the Court of Vienna; and, after all, to engage those two Courts to espouse the British cause, and join in alliance with that nation, at a period when it was engaged in an open war with its own Colonies and the houses of Bourbon,---was so important and difficult a task, as required all the activity and spirit of such a negociator as Sir James Harris. In short, such were the difficulties and obstacles, that presented themselves on all sides, that, by taking the ordinary way, there was little hope of success left; and, therefore, the minister employed in this business, found himself obliged to put every possible political spring in motion, and to stop at nothing that could contribute to his purpose.

WE

WE have too high an opinion of Sir James Harris's abilities and sagacity, not to be persuaded that he must have soon discovered the secret of the true situation of the Russian Court; *viz.* That the nobleman at the head of the Administration * would infallibly oppose Russia's abandoning the Prussian alliance, because he cherished it as a work of his own; and especially as a peaceable system, which he was addicted to by a habit of eighteen years standing; and for this very reason he would equally be against every connection with Britain before the end of the war; as such a step could not fail of appearing to him inimical to the interest of his country, already too much exhausted and ruined by the late war with the Turks, to be ready for another at such a distance from home. By applying, therefore, to this minister, there were absolutely no hopes left

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of

* Count Panin, an able and clear-sighted minister, but often very indolent and slow in his affairs; of a conciliatory and peaceable disposition, which still increased by age and bodily infirmities.

of succeeding ; and it seems, that the first advances which Sir James made to sound the minister, must have dispelled every doubt on this head.

ON the other hand, he could not but be sensible, that the Empress of Russia was neither attached to the King of Prussia's person, nor to his alliance ; that Count Panin by no means enjoyed her entire confidence, nor had a decided and exclusive influence over her mind in point of public business ; that all her views were directed towards the east, and to the carrying of the grand plan into execution, which she had formed about that time, of conquering the Greek empire in favour of the Grand Duke Constantius ; and naturally might hope, by entering with her into this extensive scheme, which had been so long considered as chimerical, or at least by shewing her the possibility of the Court of London's joining this plan, he might render that ambitious Princess more favourable to the British cause. *Lastly*, It could not escape Sir James's penetration, that Prince Potemkin, her mighty favourite, was the soul
of

of this extraordinary project, and alone seemed to cherish this idea of the Empress, either because he was the real author of it, or that his own private interest was intimately connected with it; as it could not fail of establishing his actual credit, together with the prospect of a future independency; and that, consequently, this being the person who alone had a great influence on the Empress, who counterbalanced, and even outweighed the minister, it was to him alone that Sir James could have recourse, if he expected to succeed in his enterprise.

IN this posture of affairs and disposition of sentiments, could such an active minister as Sir James was, ever eager for promoting the interest of his country, adopt any other measures to execute his difficult and important commission? Was he not absolutely obliged to give up all hopes of gaining his point through the medium of the ministry? Was he not under the greatest necessity, not only of abandoning Count Panin, but even of acting directly against him, and of attaching

himself entirely to the Empress's person, and to her mighty favourite? Yet this very method, which, we are persuaded, Sir James must have adopted with all the activity and ardour of his character, instead of leading him to his aim, which he very often had good reason to think himself nigh the attainment of, produced a quite contrary effect, *viz.* the system of the Armed Neutrality, with all the conventions for the support of neutral navigation and trade, which so much flattered the Empress's self-love, and seems to be the chief reason why the two Courts are, to this very day, so much at variance. It was very natural for Sir James to let himself be lulled into an entire security, if it be true, and we have great reason to believe so, that, after having in vain endeavoured to bring Count Panin into his plan, he had a secret audience of the Empress at Peterhoff, where she generally resides during the summer season; in which audience she so far discovered an inclination of concluding an alliance with Britain, as to desire him to inform his Court, that if England would be no longer against extending the *casus fœderis* with Russia,

sia, to its concerns with the Turks, and the affairs of the east, as it had hitherto been ; and if it would authorise him to make her formal proposals for an alliance, and claim her armed mediation, she would not hesitate a moment to comply with the request.

AFTER this favourable and positive declaration from the mouth of the sovereign, it is easy to be imagined that Sir James had not long to wait for his instructions ; and accordingly, if we are to believe those who pretend to have been in the secret, he saw himself, even that very same year, provided with every thing necessary for entering upon the negotiation. The arrival of these ample powers, the Empress and favourite being on Sir James's side, were circumstances that might have induced every one to think the business already finished when scarcely begun : But, as the nature and extent of such a negotiation required at least the formality of passing through the Russian minister's hands, Sir James found, to his infinite mortification, that, notwithstanding the personal disposition both of the
Empress

Empress and her favourite, while Count Panin was in place, he ever had, and would have, so much influence in the Cabinet, and all political concerns, as would be sufficient to undermine and destroy the most promising enterprises. As a proof of this, we shall lay before our readers the substance, if not the literal translation, of a note which that old minister was, by his own intrigues, authorised to deliver to the British envoy, by way of answer to an official paper which the latter had before presented.

“ THE sincerity of the Empress’s friendly
“ sentiments towards the King and nation of
“ Great Britain, induces her Majesty always
“ to receive, in a thankful manner, the con-
“ fidential overtures his Majesty was pleased
“ to make to her relative to the war ; but,
“ at the same time, she sees, with regret, the
“ impossibility of reconciling her sentiments,
“ and her desire of accelerating the peace,
“ with the proposals made to her by the
“ Court of London. The Empress is a lo-
“ ver of peace ; and wishes most ardently
“ that

“ that Great Britain may soon enjoy the
“ blessings of it again; but her Majesty
“ is persuaded, that the measures which the
“ Court of London proposes to her for pro-
“ curing a speedy peace, cannot fail of pro-
“ ducing a quite contrary effect; as propo-
“ sals of peace, or her mediation offered to
“ the enemies of Great Britain, without any
“ conciliatory terms, but even supported by
“ remonstrances on the justice of the British
“ cause, would certainly be the means of pro-
“ voking them to an indefinite protraction
“ of the war, and of involving the whole
“ Continent of Europe in the contest; an ef-
“ fect entirely contrary to the views of the
“ Empress in favour of the King and nation.
“ As to the proposed treaty of alliance, the
“ Empress is persuaded, that the justice and
“ equity of the King must acknowledge, that
“ the time for concluding a defensive alliance
“ is no more, when a war is already broken
“ out, and especially such a war as the pre-
“ sent; the cause of which has always been ex-
“ cluded from all the alliances that ever ex-
“ isted between Russia and Britain, as having
“ no

“ no concern with their respective dominions
“ in Europe : in every other respect, her Ma-
“ jesty assures the King, in the strongest
“ terms, that she will ever persevere in the
“ same sentiments towards his Majesty and
“ the British nation ; and if the Court of Lon-
“ don can devise an expedient for laying the
“ basis of a reconciliation between it and the
“ other belligerent powers, to prevent a fur-
“ ther effusion of blood, and is of opinion
“ that the Empress may be any ways service-
“ able to Great Britain, she promises to em-
“ brace the opportunity with the utmost ar-
“ dour, and to employ all the zeal and inte-
“ grity of a friend and natural ally of the
“ British nation, for promoting their inter-
“ est.”

THE reader may easily conceive, that an answer so inconsistent with the hopes which the Empress herself had given, and had ordered Sir James to make known to his Court in her name, must have roused the indignation of a minister less active and less zealous for the welfare of his country than Sir James, and must

must have occasioned bitter complaints on his part, both against Count Panin, and all those he imagined to be of that minister's party, and to have any influence, mediate or immediate, on him and his system. In order to put a stop to these animosities, and appease the provoked British minister, the favourite, if not the Empress herself, seems to have endeavoured to persuade him, that some circumstances, which so frequently occur in time of war, might present themselves, and give another turn to these unfavourable appearances, and therefore he would do well to watch such an occasion, and endeavour to profit by it. In fact, the opportunity was not long a-coming, and fell out as follows :—

Two Russian merchant-ships, one from Archangel, called *Concordia*, the other *St Nicolas*, belonging to Petersburg, were stopped on their voyage for the Mediterranean, and carried into Cadiz, where their cargoes were confiscated and publicly sold. This step of the Spaniards, in direct violation of the laws of free navigation and commerce, greatly ir-

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ritated

ritated the Empress; and Sir James easily foresaw that it would do so the more effectually, as that Princess had nothing more at heart than the extension of her commerce, she considering the whole navigation and trade of the Russian empire as a work of her own.

THIS last circumstance, together with the whole of the event, Sir James, hurried away by a secret desire of revenging himself on those who had opposed his success, determined to improve, and to turn, as far as possible, to his own advantage. The first step of the Empress was to send the Spanish *Chargé d' Affaires*, Mr Normandes, two ministerial notes, which he received by means of Count Panin. These notes, which may be considered as the first public papers relating to the Armed Neutrality, we have thought proper to place at the end of this Memoire, under the letter of A and B. But while the Ministry at Petersburg were taken up with reclaiming their property, and demanding satisfaction for the insult offered to their flag, the British Envoy, assisted by Prince Potemkin, persuaded the
Empress,

Empress, without the Prime Minister's knowledge, to send positive orders to the Admiralty for arming, with the greatest expedition and secrecy, a fleet of sixteen sail of the line, with six frigates, to be ready for sea by the opening of the Baltic: And he had even the promise of the Empress, that, in case the Spanish answer was not satisfactory and adequate to the demands which she had caused to be made officially to the Court of Madrid, she would procure herself satisfaction; and the squadron, which she had ordered to be equipped, would sail from the Baltic for that purpose, as soon as the season would permit.

HOWEVER strict the orders had been for keeping this resolution secret, the measures required for equipping a fleet are of such a nature that they could not be long hidden from Count Panin, who soon guessed the tendency of this armament, as well as the person that was at the bottom of it; at least the nobleman, of whom we have the detail of this whole affair, assures us, that, having one day occasion to wait upon the Russian minister, he

found him in the greatest agitation, much distressed to find out means for counteracting a measure in which he had not been consulted, and which he considered as dangerous for the Russian empire, and entirely contrary to his wife and peaceable system: And the same nobleman adds, that the old minister, addressing himself to him, said, with a kind of vivacity very uncommon to him, “ Sir, the fact is true; there is nothing more left for us than to ward off the blow; and I hope yet to be able to do it.” And, rubbing his forehead with his hand, he continued, “ My ideas are yet a little confused; I must put them in order; and in a few days I hope to be able to tell you more, and to make the storm burst over the heads of those that raised it, (by which he meant the British ministry;) who, not content with having ruined themselves, wish, by their intrigues, to set the rest of the world on fire, in hopes of saving themselves.”

THE minister had too much experience not to foresee how dangerous it would be for him
to

to incense the Empress by a direct opposition to her will ; and that the only means left of succeeding, was to enter, at least in appearance, into her resentment against Spain, and then to lay a plan before her of a much greater extent, capable of flattering her self-love, which would infallibly induce her to think herself acting the principal part on the theatre of Europe ; and this was the moment, the cause, and the aim, that gave birth to the idea and plan of the Armed Neutrality. Accordingly, he presented it to her as a system which owed its existence entirely to her own person ; insinuating, at the same time, that, being founded on the law of nations, it would be productive of the happiest effects to all the neutral powers, whom it could not fail of drawing and uniting, in a manner, under her protection ; and while it proved of the greatest advantage to her commerce, it would, by revenging her on the insult offered to her Majesty's flag, be the means of securing her against all future attacks of any nation whatever. Placed in such an agreeable point of view, it is easily to be imagined that it met with

with the Empress's full approbation ; and, this once gained, nothing remained but to insure its success ; for this reason, he desired it to be kept a profound secret, especially from the British minister ; giving the Empress farther to understand, that, by humbling one of the branches of the Bourbon family, Britain would be led to consider it as a friendly measure, and favourable to its own interest, to which both it, and the rest of the belligerent powers, would find themselves under the necessity of submitting ; and, at the same time, while the plan was marked with the greatest impartiality, and most strict neutrality, she would reserve for herself the honour of mediating in a future pacification ; an honour which this Princess enjoyed at the treaty of Teschen, and was equally the object of her wishes at the termination of the British war.

THE plan so much adapted to flatter the Empress's self-love, being thus settled, and her orders given for carrying it into execution, the able minister laid the project of a memoir before her, under the name of a

“ First

“ First declaration to the belligerent powers,
“ for settling the principles of free navigation
“ and trade †,” which met with the same approbation, and was immediately sent off by express to all the Russian ministers at the Courts of London, Paris, and Madrid, in order to be presented by them to the Courts where they were, as principles invariably adopted by her Majesty. The same day, Count Pannin, roused from his ordinary indolence, dispatched other messengers to the Russian ministers at Copenhagen and Stockholm, with orders for delivering the same declaration to those Courts, inviting them to join the Empress, and to notify to the belligerent powers their resolution of supporting those principles; and, in order to prevent all difficulties that might arise on the subject, the ministers were farther ordered to propose a convention, in which the principles were to be mutually agreed on, and the whole to be considered as a code of laws for the liberty of neutral navigation and commerce.

THUS

† For this memoir, see letter C at the end.

THUS was laid the foundation of the famous Armed Neutrality, as a counter-plot against Sir James Harris's endeavours to draw Russia into a common cause with Britain against the American Colonies, and the combined powers of France and Spain; and it is very probable that the idea of it, which was entirely Count Panin's, would never have been started, had it not been for the absolute necessity under which that able minister saw himself, of preventing Russia's engaging in a war at such a distance from home, and so ruinous for its finances.

THE plan, and, in short, the whole of the proceedings, was kept so secret from Sir James, that even the messengers were dispatched to the several Courts before he could get notice of what was carrying on; and, according to what was said to be positively known, the Empress, in order to amuse Sir James, sent him an express, desiring him previously to inform his Court, that a Russian messenger would soon be dispatched for England with very favourable declarations, which, after the assurances

rances she had already given him, she was persuaded would fully answer the expectations of the British Cabinet. From this it is evident, that the security into which Sir James was lulled, is, in every respect, excusable, supposing it to be true, and we have all authority to believe so, that Sir James sent off his messenger at the instance, and even order, of the Empress and Prince Potemkin. But we shall leave it to our readers to judge how much this very message must have heightened the disappointment of the British Ministry; for, after being previously informed of the Empress's favourable and positive intentions, they (by a declaration which the Russian minister at London presented a few days after) found the effect fall much short of their expectations, and themselves egregiously duped. The Empress, instead of the dispositions so favourably and solemnly announced, at once discovers and adopts principles entirely inconsistent with the British navigation-acts, and merely calculated to promote, in every naval war, the advantage of the House of Bourbon; for it was manifest that France and

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Spain.

Spain would thereby find themselves enabled, under the sanction and protections of Russia, and the other Princes that adopted such principles, to fill their magazines with the produce of the North, so indispensibly necessary for their marine.

FOR this reason, no sooner was Sir James officially informed of the contents and evil tendency of the Russian declaration, than he broke out into the most bitter invectives against Prince Potemkin, and the manner he had been treated by him, notwithstanding all the latter's endeavours to persuade him, that the Empress herself had been insensibly, and contrary to her inclination, inveigled by the artifices of Count Panin; and that, provided the British Ministry did not take the declaration amiss, but answer it in a friendly manner, her Majesty would do every thing in her power to prevent its having any disagreeable or disadvantageous effects for Great Britain.

SIR James could not but foresee the impression it would make upon the Ministry,
and,

and, therefore, we may suppose him not to have dissembled, that the wrong done to his country was irreparable ; and that the answer of his Court, on which it was impossible for him to have any more influence, would undoubtedly be expressive of its just surprise and indignation at a declaration so contrary to what her Majesty herself had authorised him to announce ; and accordingly the report of Mr Simolin, then Russian minister at London, verified but too much Sir James's apprehensions ; and the account he gave of the vivacity with which the British Ministry, especially the Lords Stormont and Hillsborough, had treated him, together with the personal reflections on the Empress, which they threw out, not only in his presence, but also in that of the other foreign ministers, intending thereby to wound her self-love, had no other effect but that of consolidating and finishing Count Panin's work sooner than it otherwise could have been done.

ON the other side, the reception which this declaration met with at the Courts of Bour-

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bon,

bon, was more flattering. The Counts de Vergennes and Florida Blanca were soon sensible of the advantages they might derive from it, at least for the moment ; and, therefore, in order to draw her Imperial Majesty more into their interest, Count de Vergennes prevailed with the Spanish Ministry to give her all imaginable satisfaction for the capture and sale of the two Russian merchant-ships, the *Concordia* and *St Nicolas*. From this moment the Empress began to look upon the Armed Neutrality with a still more favourable eye than she had hitherto done, adopted it as her own work, though concerted by Count Panin alone, and employed her utmost endeavours for engaging the other powers to unite for the support of the new adopted principles of free trade and navigation.

THE first proposals, as above related, having been made to the Courts of Sweden and Denmark, the Court of London used all its interest with the Danish Ministry, and particularly with Count Bernstorff, whose attachment to the British party was too well known,

to divert Denmark from entering into any engagement; but, notwithstanding the private dispositions of that minister, such were the connexions of Denmark with Russia, since the cession of Holstein, besides their being personal on the part of the Queen and Prince Frederic, that neither Britain nor Count Bernstorff could prevent the conclusion and ratification of the convention, which accordingly took place so early as the 9th of July 1780. This convention having served as a basis to the subsequent ones between the other powers, it has been thought expedient to give a copy of it at the end of this Memoir *; for the same reason, we have added the King of Sweden's accession †, and that of Denmark, to the convention between Sweden and Russia of the 1st of August ‡.

THE King of Sweden was the easier persuaded to join the Empress in the Armed Neutrality, as he seems to have caught the idea
some

* See Letter D.

† Letter E.

‡ Letter F.

some time before of himself, having made some proposals of a similar nature for the navigation of the Baltic, so early as the year 1779: and the ardour with which he engaged in this business was so great, that he dispatched a very expressive declaration to all the belligerent powers, before the signing of the convention †.

It was about this period of the King of Sweden's subscribing the convention, that Count Panin thought fit to insinuate to the King of Prussia a desire of seeing his Majesty join the confederation. But, according to what was positively asserted, the King, having no mind to enter into any engagement that only served to interrupt his tranquillity, and to expose him to the payment of annual subsidies, ordered Count Goertz, then his minister at Petersburg, to elude all formal proposals that might be made on the subject. This measure met with no great difficulty, as the Empress had at that time already begun to entertain some predilection for the late Emperor

† Letter G.

peror of Germany, Joseph the Second, with whom she was personally acquainted, and had, for that reason, shewn Count Panin no great inclination to admit the Prussian monarch.

THE only maritime power whose alliance she seemed to court in preference to all others, was the Republic of Holland. As this junction, if brought to bear, could not fail of wounding Britain in the most sensible part, the French party, which was at that time lording it over Holland, employed all its endeavours to accelerate such an event. For this purpose, two extraordinary ambassadors were sent to Peterburgh; and such was their ardour for concluding their negotiation, that, notwithstanding the ordinary slowness with which affairs are carried on in Holland, notwithstanding the obstacles which the Court of London was continually throwing in their way, and the measures taken by Sir James Harris for preventing the blow, they signed their accession to the Armed Neutrality, under the same conditions that had been offered to, and accepted by Sweden and Denmark.

THE

THE British minister, finding it absolutely impossible to prevent Holland's accession, seems to have given his Court timely notice of its critical situation; and there is little room left to doubt, but that was the reason that determined the Court of St James to declare war against the Dutch before they were yet acknowledged members of the association, or at least before their accession was made officially known to the British Court, hoping thereby that the Empress, being informed of the rupture, and the situation the Republic was in, with respect to Great Britain, before the signing of the convention, would break off all further negotiations; or, in case the rupture proved no obstacle to Holland's admission, yet the particular circumstance of the war's breaking out before the admission took place, would at least furnish the members of the Armed Neutrality with a motive for not considering hostilities against the Republic as a direct attack upon the whole system; and the Republic would consequently find itself entirely deprived of all the advantages and support

port it had reason to expect from the union :
Such, at least, were the consequences.

IN order to enable our readers to form their opinion on the grand question, Whether the Republic was to expect any real assistance during the war in which it had been involved on account of its accession to the neutral combination, and the manner in which the Court of Sweden explained their sentiments upon it? we have thought proper to annex, at the end of this Memoir*, the copies, 1st, Of a memoir which the Swedish minister was ordered to present to the Russian ministry; 2^{dly}, Of a Rescript from a Russian minister to Count Mouschin Pouschkin, the Empress's ambassador at Stockholm; and, 3^{dly}, Of a ministerial letter from Count Panin to the Baron de Sacken, Russian envoy at Copenhagen, which will undoubtedly be found to be most instructive and interesting pieces.

E

To

* These copies are to be found at the end, under H, I, and K.

To these we have added the copy * of Count Panin's ministerial answer to the Swedish envoy, together with the extract of an official dispatch † from Denmark to Mr Schumacher ‡, Danish *Chargé d' Affaires* at Petersburg, both which pieces will be found equally interesting, as they discover the fundamental principles which had been agreed on by the contracting Courts in support of their system.

IN this Danish dispatch, the reader will remark, that the King of Denmark desires the
Empress

* See L.

† See M.

‡ This gentleman, whose exterior was entirely to his disadvantage, and seemed to indicate a man of very limited parts, must have been one of the most intriguing beings in the universe: he kept up a continual correspondence, unknown to Count Bernstorff, then State minister, with Prince Frederic, and Mr Gudberg, formerly the Prince's preceptor, and afterwards minister of State; and we are persuaded that it was greatly owing to the double reports of this gentleman that Count Bernstorff was disgraced; who has nevertheless been again reinstated into his former place.

Empress to employ her interest with the Prussian monarch, in order to draw him into the combination, and thereby to add a still greater weight and consistency to the grand system; which circumstance is a certain proof, that the King of Prussia, far from being the author of the Armed Neutrality, had not yet so much as approved of its principles.

WE are by no means inclined to advance, that it was entirely owing to these instances of the Danish Court, which at that period had the whole confidence of the Russian Cabinet, and was equally allied with the Court of Berlin, that the Empress was induced to admit her old ally: on the contrary, we are certain, that it is to be ascribed to quite another cause, *viz.* the Prussian monarch's reclaiming the protection of the combined Courts for his merchant-ships, about the end of March, which was immediately granted by Denmark and Sweden, and brought forth a formal invitation of the Russian Empress, by means of an official note, to take an active part in the system, and to be one of the contracting parties;

ties ; in consequence of which the King did not think fit to delay any longer ; and accordingly his act of accession was signed at Peterburgh May the 8th, 1781.

THOUGH this step of the King was entirely to the advantage of his subjects and commerce, yet we have great reason to suppose that his Majesty had something more in view than commerce alone ; and that his real and essential motive for becoming one of the contracting parties, was rather, on one hand, a desire of gratifying the Empress, by giving her a public proof, notwithstanding the circumstances, of his great attachment to her alliance, and how great a value he set upon every thing that could contribute towards settling this connection upon a more permanent basis ; which, on the other hand, could not fail of persuading the public, that his alliance with Russia was yet far from drawing to an end.

THE signing of the acts of accession and acceptance, which were to be exchanged between Sweden, Denmark, and Prussia, did
not

not take place before the commencement of the year 1782; and the official notes of the two former Courts, which are to be seen at the end of this Memoir *, together with their acts of accession and acceptation †, which were at last exchanged at Petersburgh the 2d of May of the same year, show the great difficulties the King made against a stipulation which could have obliged him to lend the others assistance in case of a rupture, and the great modifications which Sweden and Denmark admitted of as an effect of their particular regard for that great Prince.

AFTER the King of Prussia's accession, the Emperor of Germany, Joseph the Second, probably in order not to be behind with the King in showing his attachment to the Empress, and in entering into all the views and systems of his new friend Catharine the Second, with whom he had already concluded an alliance, ordered Count Cobenzel, then his minister at the Court of Petersburgh, to
sign

* N and O.

† P and Q.

sign and exchange his accession†. He was followed by the Courts of Naples and Lisbon; but

† The acts of the German empire were signed by Joseph, and those of Russia by Catharine; a measure totally differing from the general custom, which seems to have been devised by the Court of Vienna, merely in order to elude all Russia's pretensions to the same degree of dignity, and to keep up that precedency which all the powers of Europe have ever, to the present day, granted the Emperor of the Romans, and which the Emperor always promises, at his election, to maintain: but there is a singular circumstance to be remarked here, which seems to have escaped the attention, not of the empire alone, but perhaps of all the European Cabinets, and proves, that the subtlety of the Russians has got a visible advantage by formal acts, on which they may in future found their pretended equality, notwithstanding the above-mentioned device of the Emperor to elude it; for when the different acts, signed by the two sovereigns, were to be exchanged between the Plenipotentiaries of Russia and the Emperor of Germany, the Russian minister had a double protocol in readiness, in which the ministers of the two imperial Courts attested the act of exchange: and the Emperor's minister, Count Cobenzel, whether by or without his master's command, is not for us here to determine, condescended so far as to sign the two copies alternately with the Russian minister, according to the adopted practice of equal Courts.

This

but what may appear to have something curious in it, is, that the latter only signed its accession after the peace was concluded between the Courts of England and Bourbon.

THAT nothing may be wanting to the history of this singular event, and in order to collect all the official papers which may have any concern with the Armed Neutrality, we have added two other memoirs, and flatter ourselves that they will not be thought superfluous; the first from Gustavus to the Empress, dated August the 7th, 1782†, in which he manifests an ardent desire of giving this code of maritime laws a greater degree of consistency, and of extending its effects beyond the time of war; besides a wish of sharing with her the honour of mediator;—the second, her Majesty's answer, in which she seems

This act must appear still more extraordinary, if we consider, that no one ever dared to register an exchange of the acts signed by the sovereigns themselves; and that this kind of protocol has the appearance of the ministers ratifying what their respective masters had concluded.

† See letter R.

seems to indicate no great desire of admitting the King, as she thought she had an exclusive right to the mediation †.

† *Vide S ad finem.*

MEMOIRS

MEMOIRS

AND

OFFICIAL PAPERS,

RELATIVE TO

THE ARMED NEUTRALITY.

THE GREATER PART OF THEM NEVER
BEFORE PUBLISHED.

[TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.]

MEMOIRS, &c.

(A)

FROM THE COURT OF PETERSBURGH TO THAT
OF MADRID.

THE Empress's consul at Cadiz had scarce time to acquaint his Court with the unexpected resolution of that of Madrid, to carry all the neutral vessels, bound for the Mediterranean, into this port, and to sell their cargoes to the highest bidder, without the consent and participation either of the owners, or of the consuls from their respective nations, residing there, when formal complaints were made by several Russian subjects, on account of those obstacles which are thrown in the way of commerce and of common security, on which all trade is founded.

WHILE some already experience the fatal effects of such measures, others, justly alarmed, see a stop put to their speculations, and

themselves reduced to the necessity of abandoning their wisest projects which they had formed, both to their own advantage, and that of the empire of which they are subjects. Among the number of the former, we find the commercial house of Mr Ruitger van Brienon, Son, and Company, which had freighted one half on its own account, and the other half on that of Mr Hoppe and Co. Amsterdam, under the firm of the latter, the ship *Concordia*, Captain Hans Jansen, with four thousand bushels of wheat. She was first bound for Lisbon; from thence she was to direct her course to Barcelona, and afterwards to Marseilles, Genua, or Leghorn, according as it would be found most convenient, always regulating herself according to the price of that branch of trade, and the probability of gain, as has been at every time the practice of merchants. Such were the terms of the contract made with the captain; but, before he had time to weigh anchor, he received orders from his employers, who had got notice of the scarcity of wheat at Barcelona, to direct his course immediately thither; in consequence of which,

the

the ship set sail for Barcelona, and continued her voyage to the Streights of Gibraltar, where she was stopped by a Spanish Chebec, and, without the least attention being paid either to her place of destination, or to her cargo, which belonged indisputably to neutral owners, carried into Cadiz, where her cargo was publicly sold, for at least four thousand pesos less than it would have produced by the current price at Barcelona.

THERE are other advices received of similar infractions made upon the security of commerce in general, and to the disadvantage of Russian subjects in particular: but the detail of the whole is not yet come to hand.

HER Imperial Majesty cannot, without the greatest surprise, see the Court of Madrid resolved to go such lengths against the navigation and commerce of all the neutral powers, while the usage, received and universally respected in the greatest heat of war, has limited such a right only to fortresses and hostile towns during the time of a blockade or siege, which is the case with no other place but the
fort

fort of Gibraltar alone. We need only to compare these principles with those adopted by the Spanish Government at the breaking out of the war with Great Britain, which contained nothing less than an entire liberty and security of commerce for all the neutral nations. Even in the letter, which, on the 10th of July, Count Florida Blanca sent by order of his Most Catholic Majesty to all the foreign ministers residing at Madrid, this Court reserves to itself the power of examining those vessels only that are suspected of taking the way of Gibraltar; and announces a will to detain those only who are found directing their course thither, contrary to the object of the blockade. Undoubtedly no power has a right to demand any sort of concessions or exceptions incompatible with the universally adopted laws of nations; but, on the other hand, it is no less certain, that equity and justice demand the satisfaction due to the subjects of her Imperial Majesty of all the Russias, which, by her express orders, her ministers are bound to demand. This satisfaction consists chiefly in the following points:—

1st,

1st, THAT all neutral vessels, whose cargoes are found to be either entirely, or in part, Russian property, and have been forcibly taken and detained against their will, either in Cadiz, or any other port of Spain, be immediately released to continue their voyage towards the place of their destination, with exception of ports actually blocked up, as is the case with the fort of Gibraltar.

2^{dly}, THAT a due compensation be made for all the losses and damages caused by such violent detentions, seizures, forced sales, and by the difference of the prices which must be the consequence ; or by such other arbitrary steps through which the Russian subjects have lately suffered, and particularly, in the present case, the house of R. van Brienon, Son, and Co. ; and that they be speedily and amply indemnified : And,

3^{dly}, THAT the orders for carrying all neutral vessels, without distinction, into Cadiz, or any where else, be immediately recalled.

IT

It is not necessary to enumerate here the reasons which must induce his Catholic Majesty to redress the complaints of so many nations, the reciprocal confidence (*bona fides*) which constitutes the basis of all commerce—the public security, without which no trade can subsist; and the evils, which would be the result of its interruption, are too serious to be overlooked by a just and equitable Prince, or by the wisdom of his Ministry. There are other considerations which concern Russia and Spain in particular, whose direct commerce has of late been settled to the mutual advantage of both nations, and which it would be very afflicting to see ruined, when it had scarce arrived at any degree of consistency.

COMPLAINTS have been made on all hands, and very often by the Courts of Madrid and Versailles against Great Britain, for troubling the liberty of commerce; yet the Court of London ever took care to content the neutral merchants whose property had been seized, conformably to their own invoices, and even by adding a considerable profit. If this proceeding

ceeding has deservedly met with just reproaches, how much more surprizing must not the principles, actually adopted by Spain, appear to the eyes of all nations?

HER Imperial Majesty has already given too many proofs of her sincerity, candour, and impartiality, not to expect, with good grounds, to meet with the same sentiments in his Catholic Majesty; and now, from his friendship and equity, she looks for the just satisfaction due to her subjects, whose interest and advantage she has particularly in view.

Given at St Petersburg the 24th of January, 1780.

G

NOTE

(B)

*Note for M. de Normandes, Charge Dé Affaires of his
Catholic Majesty.*

It is already known to the Court of Madrid, by the note which was lately remitted to it, with how little regard the property of a Russian subject, on board of a Dutch vessel, called the Concordia, Captain Hans Jansen, bound from Archangel to Barcelona, has been disposed of. If this step, entirely contrary to the general law of nations, and to the practice adopted between trading and friendly nations, could not but hurt her Imperial Majesty, she must necessarily have been affected at the account which the Russian consul at Cadiz gives of the proceedings against the St Nicolas, a Russian merchant-ship, Captain John Landschoff, belonging to James Chadimiroffsky, merchant at Petersburg. This ship, laden with 942 sacks of wheat, on the account of the said merchant, for Malaga and Leghorn, and whose cargo, in return, was to con-

fist

list of Spanish wines, has been taken by Don Arthur Moreno, and carried into Cadiz, where the captain's papers were seized, and, without the least notice given to the Russian consul, settled at Cadiz ; or, without leave to the captain to say any thing in his own behalf, the whole was put up to sale ; and even the flag was not named in the advertisement of the sale, as is usual with regard to other nations.

THE less the Imperial Court of Russia could expect a step so disregardful of its neutrality and the free commerce of its subjects, the more it sees itself obliged to make its just complaints to the Court of Madrid, of the irregular and arbitrary conduct of its officers. The Ministry of Russia, by express and positive order of her Imperial Majesty, hastens to invite the *Charge d' Affaires* to bring these complaints before his Court ; and adds the formal requisition, that an entire restitution be made of the value of the property belonging to her Imperial Majesty's subjects, and a full indemnification given for the losses to which they may

have been exposed, or which they may have in future to sustain. In order to fulfil the intentions of their sovereign, the Ministry, moreover, demands, that every Russian vessel, detained in such an illegal manner, be immediately allowed to prosecute its voyage to the place of its destination; and that express orders be given to every Spanish ship of war, or privateer, not to trouble the navigation and commerce of Russia, but to pay every regard due to her flag and neutrality.

THE Empress has too great an opinion of his Catholic Majesty's way of thinking, and of his sentiments on the reciprocal duties of sovereigns, on their dignity, the welfare of their subjects, and their obligations thence arising, not to be persuaded that these complaints cannot fail of being redressed, as soon as they will have been laid before the King; and that a prompt and public satisfaction will remove all subject of complaint, by restoring that confidence and security on which the vigour and activity of all commerce between nations depends.

THE

(C)

The Empress of Russia's first Declaration to the Belligerent Powers, for settling the Neutral Principles for the Liberty of Commerce ; Feb. 1780.

THE Empress of all the Russias has manifested her sentiments of justice, equity, and moderation, and has given such evident proofs, during the war which she had to carry on with the Ottoman Porte, of her regard for the rights and laws of neutrality, and of the liberty of general commerce, that she can refer to all Europe for its testimony.

THIS conduct, together with the principles of impartiality which she has manifested during the present war, could not but inspire her with a just confidence, that her subjects would peaceably enjoy the fruits of their industry, with the advantages due to every neutral nation ; but experience has proved the contrary. Neither these considerations, nor a regard for what the law of nations prescribes, could

could prevent her Imperial Majesty's subjects from being molested in their navigation, and stopped in their operations, by the belligerent powers.

THESE obstructions to the liberty of commerce in general, and that of Russia in particular, are of such a nature as to excite the attention of all the neutral powers; and the Empress sees herself obliged to use all such means for removing them, which shall be found compatible with her dignity and the welfare of her subjects: but, before putting them in execution, with a sincere intention of preventing all further attacks, she thinks it but just to lay before the eyes of Europe the principles she intends to follow, by which all misunderstanding, and every occasion thereof, may be avoided. She does this with the greater confidence, as she finds those principles founded on the primitive law of nations, which every one may have recourse to, and which the belligerent powers cannot invalidate without violating the laws of neutrality, and disavowing maxims which they themselves

selves have expressly adopted in different treaties and public engagements.

THEY consist in the following points :—

1st, THAT the neutral vessels may navigate at full liberty from port to port, and on the coasts of the nations at war.

2^{dly}, THAT all effects belonging to the subjects of the said nations at war, be free on board the neutral vessels—prohibited goods excepted.

3^{dly}, THAT as to the determining of the latter, her Majesty refers to the 10th and 11th articles of her treaty of commerce with Great Britain, extending these obligations to all the belligerent powers.

4^{thly}, THAT, in order to ascertain the meaning of a blocked harbour, this denomination is not to be granted but to such a place, where, through the disposition of the power that

that attacks it with ships of war, near enough stationed, it is evidently dangerous to enter.

5thly, THAT these principles shall serve as rules in all proceedings and decisions on the legality of prizes. While her Imperial Majesty makes them known, she does not hesitate to declare, that, in order to maintain and protect the honour of her flag, the security of commerce, and the navigation of her subjects, against every attack, she has given orders for the equipment of a considerable part of her marine. This measure, however, will not have the least influence, in any respect, on the strict and rigorous neutrality which she has so exactly observed, and which she ever will observe, as long as she is not provoked and forced out of the limits of moderation and perfect impartiality; and it is only in this extremity that her fleet will be ordered to direct its course wherever honour, interest, and necessity demand it.

WHILE the Empress gives this formal assurance, with that candour proper to her character,

rafter, ſhe cannot but expect that the belligerent powers, penetrated with the ſame ſentiments of juſtice and equity with which ſhe is animated, will contribute towards the accompliſhment of her ſalutary views, which tend ſo manifeſtly to the good of all nations, and to the advantage even of thoſe at war; and that conſequently they will provide their admiral-
ties and commanding officers with correſponding inſtructions, conform to the above-mentioned principles, which have been drawn from the primitive code of nations, and ſo often adopted in their conventions.

H

Maritime

(D)

Maritime Convention for the Support of free Neutral Navigation, concluded between her Imperial Majesty and his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, at Copenhagen, the 28th of June-9th of July, 1780.

THE present naval war, which has broke out between Great Britain on one side, and France and Spain on the other, having been of great prejudice to the commerce and navigation of neutral nations, her Imperial Majesty of all the Russias, and his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, always attentive to reconcile their dignity, and their care for the security and the happiness of their subjects, with the regard which they have so often shown for the rights of nations in general, have found themselves under the necessity of regulating their conduct, in the present circumstances, according to these sentiments.

HER

Her Imperial Majesty of all the Russias has avowed, in the eyes of all Europe, by means of her declaration, dated February the 28th, 1780, and sent to the powers at war, the principles founded in the primitive law of nations, which she recurs to, and which she has adopted as a rule for her conduct during the present war. This care of her Majesty to watch over and support the common rights of nations, having been approved of by all the neutral powers, has united them in a cause which concerns the defence of their dearest interests, and has led them to apply seriously to an object of so much benefit for the time present and to come, so as to show them the importance of forming and uniting in a permanent and immoveable system, the rights, prerogatives, limits, and obligations of neutrality. His Majesty, the King of Denmark and Norway, guided by the same principles, has equally adopted and recurred to them in his declaration which he sent, the 8th of July 1780, to the three belligerent powers, in conformity with that of Russia; and, for the support of these principles, his Danish Majesty

has even ordered the equipment of part of his fleet. From thence arose that concord and unanimity with which her Imperial Majesty of all the Russias, and his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, in consequence of their friendship and mutual confidence, as well as of the conformity of their subjects interests, have thought fit to sanction, by the means of a formal convention, the mutual engagements which are to be taken for this effect. Their said Majesties have chosen and named for their plenipotentiaries, as follows : Her Imperial Majesty of all the Russias, M. Charles d'Osten, called *Sacken*, actual Counsellor of State, Knight of the Order of St Anne, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of her said Majesty at the Court of Denmark, &c. ; and his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, Otto Count de Thott, Privy Counsellor of his Council, Knight of the Order of the Elephant, &c. ; M. Joachim Otto de Schack-Rathlou, Privy Counsellor of his Majesty's Council, Knight of the Order of the Elephant, &c. ; M. John Henry d' Eickstedt, Privy Counsellor of his Council,

Council, Governor of his Royal Highness the Prince Royal, Knight of the Order of the Elephant, &c. ; and Andrew Peter Count de Bernstorff, Privy Counsellor of his Council, Secretary of State for the department of foreign affairs, Director of the German Chancery, Knight of the Order of the Elephant, &c. —who after having exchanged their full powers, which were found in good and due form, have agreed on and concluded the following articles :—

ARTICLE I.

THEIR said Majesties, being sincerely resolved to keep up constantly the most perfect friendship and harmony with the powers actually at war, and to observe further the most strict and exact neutrality, declare their intentions of executing, in the most rigorous manner, all their prohibitions which concern their subjects carrying on a contraband trade, with any of the powers already at war, or which may, in future, be engaged in it.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE II.

IN order to avoid all equivocation or misunderstanding on those merchandises which come under the name of contraband, her imperial Majesty of all the Russias, and his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, declare, that no other shall be acknowledged but such as are comprehended under that denomination in the treaties subsisting between their said Majesties and one or the other of the belligerent powers; her Imperial Majesty referring in particular, on this account, to the 10th and 11th articles of her treaty of commerce with Great Britain: And she extends the obligations thereof, which are entirely founded in the law of nature, to the Crowns of France and Spain, who have hitherto not been allied with her empire, by any formal engagement merely relative to commerce.— His Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, on his side, refers also especially to the 3d article of his commercial treaty with Great Britain, and to the 26th and 27th articles of his

his

his treaty of commerce with France, and extends the obligations of the latter to Spain, as having no decisive engagements with that crown on this point.

ARTICLE III.

THE contraband goods being thus determined and excluded from the commerce of neutral nations, conform to the treaties, and express stipulations subsisting between the high contracting parties and the powers at war, and particularly by virtue of the treaty of commerce concluded between Russia and Great Britain, the 10th of June 1766; the treaty of commerce concluded between Denmark and Great Britain the 11th of July 1670, and of that concluded between Denmark and France the 23d of August 1772; her Imperial Majesty of all Russias, and his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, understand and will have every other kind of traffic to be and remain perfectly free. Their Majesties, after having already rested their claim in their declarations sent to the belligerent

rent powers on the general principles of natural law, of which the liberty of commerce and navigation, together with the rights of neutral nations, are a direct consequence, are resolved not to leave them any longer to an arbitrary interpretation, suggested by private and momentary interests; and for this reason they have agreed,

1st, THAT every vessel may sail at full liberty from port to port, and on the coasts of the nations at war.

2dly, THAT all the effects belonging to the subjects of the said powers at war, on board neutral vessels, be free, the articles of contraband excepted.

3dly, THAT in order to determine the meaning of a blocked harbour, this denomination be not granted to any other place, but to those whose entrance is rendered evidently dangerous on account of ships stationed off them at a convenient distance, by order of the attacking power.

4thly,

4thly, THAT neutral vessels cannot be stopped without a just cause and evident facts ; that they must be judged without delay ; that their process be always uniform, prompt, and legal ; and that every time, besides the indemnification which is to be made to those who have incurred any losses without their fault, a complete satisfaction be given for the insult offered to the flags of their Majesties.

ARTICLE IV.

FOR the better protecting the mutual trade of their subjects, founded on the principles above settled, her Imperial Majesty of all Russias, and his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, have thought fit to equip severally some men of war, with a proportionate number of frigates, the squadrons of either power being to take their station, and to be employed as convoys where commerce and navigation require, conform to the nature and quality of the trade of each nation.

ARTICLE V.

IF, however, any merchant ships of either power should happen to be in a place where none of the ships of war belonging to the same nation are stationed, and where it would be out of their power to have recourse to their own convoys, then the commanding officer of the men of war belonging to the other power, if required, is to lend them, in the best and sincerest manner, every assistance they may stand in need of ; and, in such case, the men of war and frigates of one of the powers is to serve as a support of the merchant-ships of the other, provided the party claiming aid has been carrying on no unlawful trade, contrary to the principles of neutrality.

ARTICLE VI.

THIS convention is to have no retroactive effect, and consequently no part is to be taken in the differences which have arisen before its conclusion, excepting in case of continued acts of violence, tending to establish a
system

system oppressive for all neutral nations of Europe in general.

ARTICLE VII.

If, notwithstanding the most attentive and most friendly cares of the two powers, and notwithstanding their observing the most perfect neutrality, any of the merchant-ships belonging to the subjects of her Imperial Majesty of all Russias, or his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, should happen to be insulted, pillaged, or taken by the men of war or privateers of one or the other power at war, then the minister of the injured party at the Court whose ships or privateers have committed such acts of violence, shall remonstrate against them, claim the merchant-ship taken, and insist on a proper indemnification, never losing sight of a reparation for the insult offered the flag. The minister of the other contracting party shall join him, and support his claim with energy, and in the most efficacious manner; and thus every thing shall be transacted jointly, and with a perfect accord.

I 2

But

But if, on such complaints being made, justice should be refused, or deferred from time to time, then their Majesties shall use reprisals against the power that refuses it, and they shall immediately concert the most efficacious measures for making such just reprisals.

ARTICLE VIII.

SHOULD either of the two powers, or both together, happen to be troubled or attacked on account of, and out of hatred to the present convention, or for whatever other reason that may have any connection with it, the two Courts have, in the same manner, agreed to consider it as a common cause, and to defend themselves mutually, and to labour and act in concert, in order to procure themselves a full and entire satisfaction, both for the insult done to their flag, and for the losses sustained by their subjects.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE IX.

THIS convention being concluded and agreed on for the time the present war shall last, shall serve as a basis to future engagements which circumstances may render necessary, or on account of new naval wars which Europe may have the misfortune to be troubled with. These stipulations shall further be considered as permanent, and shall decide in matters of commerce and navigation, and, in short, in every case where the rights of neutral nations are to be determined.

ARTICLE X.

THE chief end and object of this convention being to establish the general liberty of commerce and navigation, her Imperial Majesty of all Russias, and his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, agree and engage themselves before-hand, to consent that other powers equally neutral may accede, and that, by adopting the principles, they may partake both of the obligations and advantages.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE XI.

IN order to prevent the powers at war from pretending ignorance relative to the arrangements which have taken place between their said Majesties, the two high contracting parties shall communicate in a friendly manner to the belligerent powers the measures they have concerted between themselves, and which have the less hostile tendency, as they are to the disadvantage of no other power, and have no other object whatever but to secure the commerce and navigation of their respective subjects.

ARTICLE XII.

THE present convention shall be ratified by the two contracting parties, and the ratifications, in good and due form, exchanged within the space of six weeks, to begin from the day it was signed, or sooner, if possible; in faith of which, we, the underwritten, have,
by

by virtue of our full powers, signed and put
our seals to it.

Done at Copenhagen the 9th day of the
month of July, in the year of our Lord
1780.

Charles d'Osten,
called *Sacken,*
(L. S.)

O. Thott,
(L. S.)

J. Schack Rathblou,
(L. S.)

H. Eickstedt,
(L. S.)

A. P. Count Bernstorff,
(L. S.)

THE ratifications of this convention were
exchanged at Copenhagen the 5th-10th Sep-
tember 1780, by the same plenipotentiaries
who had signed it.

AND as here at St Petersburg, on the 21st
of July last, the ministers authorised to that
purpose,

purpose, *viz.* on the part of her Imperial Majesty, Nikita Count Panin, her actual privy counsellor, senator, actual chamberlain and knight of the orders of St Andrew, St Alexander Newsky, and St Anne; and John Count Osterman, her vice-chancellor, privy counsellor, and knight of St Alexander Newsky and St Anne: and, on the part of his Majesty the King of Sweden, Frederic Baron Nolken, his Majesty's envoy extraordinary at the Court of her Imperial Majesty, chamberlain and commander of the order of the Polar Star, knight of the order of the Sword and of St John—have signed and exchanged the ratifications of another convention of the same form, and couched in the same terms, word for word, with that of Copenhagen, the 2d article excepted, where, on account of a similar explanation of the nature of contraband goods in general, it was found necessary to refer to the treaties subsisting between the Crown of Sweden and the other powers; for this reason, and in order to avoid repeating what has already been said, it has been thought sufficient to insert the second article here *verbatim*. It is still

still to be observed, that the two Kings, by uniting themselves with the Empress, have mutually acceded, through the means of acts signed by themselves, as principal contracting parties, to the above-mentioned conventions, concluded between her Imperial Majesty and their said Majesties ; which acts have been exchanged here by her Majesty's minister.

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The Second Article of the Convention of St Petersburg, concluded between her Imperial Majesty and his Majesty the King of Sweden, signed July the 21st, 1780.

IN order to avoid every equivocation and all misunderstanding on the qualification of prohibited goods, her Imperial Majesty of all Russias, and his Majesty the King of Sweden, declare to acknowledge but such as are comprised under that denomination in the different treaties subsisting between their said Majesties and the one or other of the belligerent powers. Her Imperial Majesty of all Russias, in that regard referring particularly to the 10th and 11th articles of her treaty of commerce with Great Britain, the obligations of which, entirely founded on the law of nature, she extends to the Crowns of France and Spain, which have hitherto never been allied with her empire by any formal treaty merely relating to commerce. His Majesty the King of Sweden, on his side, refers also in particular to the 11th article of his treaty of commerce with Great Britain, and to the tenor of
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the preliminary treaty of commerce concluded between the two Crowns of Sweden and France in 1741; and although, in the latter, the definition of contraband goods be not specifically explained, yet, as the two Crowns have stipulated to consider themselves reciprocally as the most favoured nation; and, moreover, Sweden has therein reserved for itself the same advantages, which, through an ancient right, the Hanseatic towns enjoy in France, and which have been solemnly confirmed by the treaties of Utrecht, the King has nothing more to add. With regard to Spain, the King sees himself in the same case with the Empress, and, after her example, he extends to the said Crown all the obligations of the above-mentioned treaties, entirely founded in the law of nature.

(E)

Copy of the Declaration in which his Majesty the King of Sweden accedes to the Convention concluded between her Majesty the Empress of all Russias, and his Majesty the King of Denmark, and signed at Copenhagen the 9th of July, N. S. 1780.

WE, Gustavus, by the grace of God, King of Sweden, of the Goths and Vandals, &c. &c. Heir of Norway, Duke of Sleswic-Holstein, of Stormari and Ditmarsen, Count of Oldenburg and Delmenhorst, &c. &c. make known, That having been invited to accede, as principal contracting party, to the convention concluded and ratified the 9th of July of the present year, at Copenhagen, between her Majesty the Empress of all Russias, and his Majesty the King of Denmark, perfectly resembling the convention concluded between her said Imperial Majesty of all Russias, signed at St Petersburg the 21st of July-1st of August, of the present year, and ratified by us the 9th of September following, we
certify

certify formally, by this present declaration, that having equally at heart the maintenance of the general liberty of neutral commerce and navigation, and being animated in this respect with the same sentiments as their said Majesties are, we accede in the best form, as principal contracting party, to the above-mentioned convention; and we engage for us, and our successors, in all the stipulations contained in the clauses and separate articles which have been added thereto, and to which we equally accede in all their form and tenor. We expect that her Imperial Majesty of all Russias, and his Majesty the King of Denmark, shall likewise declare, by means of a formal act, their having received and accepted this our declaration, and their acknowledging us as a principal contracting party with regard to the said convention; and since his Majesty the King of Denmark, after being previously invited, has also acceded in the same manner, and in the same sense, to the convention, entirely conform to that concluded between us and her Imperial Majesty of all

all Russias, and signed at Petersburg the 21st July-1st of August, of the present year, we declare solemnly that we accept his accession, and that we acknowledge his Danish Majesty as principal contracting party of this convention, and of the six separate articles which have been added to it. In faith of which we have signed the present act of accession with our own hand, and sealed it with our Royal seal.

Done and given at Spa the 9th of September 1780.

(Signed) GUSTAVE.

U. G. Franc.

Copy

(F)

Copy of the Declaration by which his Danish Majesty accedes to the Convention concluded between her Majesty the Empress of all Russias, and his Majesty the King of Sweden, and signed at Petersburgh the 21st of July-1st of August, 1780.

CHRISTIAN the Seventh, by the grace of God, King of Denmark, Norway, the Vandals and Goths, Duke of Sleswic-Holstein, Stormarn, the Dithmarshes and Oldenburg, &c. &c. make known, That having been invited to accede, as a principal contracting party, to the convention concluded and ratified the 21st of July-1st of August, 1780, at St Petersburg, between her Majesty the Empress of all Russias, and his Majesty the King of Sweden, perfectly corresponding with the convention concluded between us and her said Imperial Majesty, and signed at Copenhagen the 9th of July 1780, we certify formally, by this declaration, that having equally at heart the maintenance of the general liberty of neutral

tral navigation and trade, and being, in this respect, animated with the same sentiments as their said Majesties are, we accede in the best form, as a contracting party, to the afore-said convention ; and we engage for ourselves, and for our successors, to all the stipulations contained in its clauses and articles, as well as in the six separate articles which are annexed to it, and to which we equally accede in all their form and tenor. We expect that her Imperial Majesty of all Russias, and his Majesty the King of Sweden, shall likewise declare, in a formal act, their having received and accepted their own declaration, and that they shall acknowledge us as a principal contracting party with regard to the said convention : and as his Majesty the King of Sweden, after having been invited, has also in the same manner, and in the same sense, acceded to the convention entirely corresponding with that concluded between us and her Majesty the Empress of all Russias, and signed at Copenhagen the 9th of July 1780, we solemnly declare that we accept his accession, and that we acknowledge his Swedish Majesty as one
of

of the principal contracting parties of this convention, and of the six separate articles annexed to it. In faith of which, we have signed the present act of accession and acceptance with our own hand, and sealed it with the great seal of our Crown.

Done and given in our castle of Fredensburg, the 7th day of the month of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred eighty, and the fifteenth of our reign.

CHRISTIAN *Rex.*

A. V. Bernstorff.

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Copy

(G)

Copy of the Project of a Declaration to be sent by the King to the belligerent Powers, which was approved of, and dispatched by his Majesty the King of Sweden to the Courts of Versailles, London, and Madrid, from Aix la Chapelle, the 24th of July 1780.

SINCE the beginning of the present war, the King has ever taken care to make his sentiments known to all Europe: He has prescribed to himself the law of a perfect neutrality. He has fulfilled its duties with a scrupulous exactness, and consequently expected to enjoy the rights attached to the quality of an absolute neutral sovereign: But, notwithstanding all this, his trading subjects have been obliged to implore his protection, which his Majesty saw himself under the necessity of granting. For this purpose, the King ordered, last year, the arming of a certain number of men of war, one part of which he employed on the coasts of his kingdom, and the other

ther part was to serve as convoys for the Swedish merchant-ships in the different seas where the commerce of his subjects rendered their sailing necessary. He gave the belligerent powers notice of his measures ; and he was preparing to continue them during the course of the present year, when other Courts, which had, in like manner, adopted neutrality, informed him of the dispositions they had taken, which were conform to those of the King, and tended to the same end.

THE Empress of Russia ordered a declaration to be sent to the Courts of London, Versailles, and Madrid, in which she made known to them her resolution of defending the trade of her subjects, and the universal rights of neutral nations. This declaration was founded on such just principles of the law of nations and of subsisting treaties, that it seemed impossible to call them in doubt. His Majesty found them entirely corresponding with his own case, and with the treaties concluded in 1660 between Sweden and England, and, in 1741, between Sweden and

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France ;

France ; and his Majesty could not refuse to acknowledge and to adopt the same principles, not only with regard to those powers with whom the said treaties are still in vigour, but also to those that are already entangled in the present war, or may in future be concerned in it, and with whom the King is not allied by any kind of treaty. This is the universal law, which, in default of particular engagements, becomes binding for every nation.

CONSEQUENTLY the King declares, actually and anew, that he is to observe in future the same neutrality, and with the same exactness he has done hitherto. He will forbid, under grievous penalties, his subjects to deviate, in any manner whatever, from those duties which a similar neutrality imposes on them ; but he is determined to use all possible means for the protection of their commerce, if it be carried on conform to the above-mentioned principles.

Memoir

(H)

Memoir of the Court of Sweden for that of Russia.

WHEN the Republic of the United Provinces of the low countries resolved to take part in the neutrality, by acceding to the maritime conventions of the northern powers, it enjoyed a perfect neutrality, and nothing opposed the accomplishment of a work which was brought to perfection by the means of an act of accession and acceptance signed at Petersburgh the 24th of December last, O. S.

ON this occasion, the Republic engaged in the common cause of the neutral powers, and acquired, as such, a right to the assistance of the other powers, with whom she was to partake of the obligations and advantages conform to the tenor of the conventions concluded last year between Sweden, Russia, and Denmark.

BUT

BUT the Republic could not long remain in that quality under which it had contracted its engagements. England declared war against it, and forced the Republic out of the class of neutrals into that of belligerent powers. All this was carried on with such a prodigious rapidity, that the ambassadors on both sides were recalled, letters of reprisals issued, and several Dutch vessels taken before the news of the accession being signed at Petersburg could reach the Hague.

IN such an extraordinary situation of things, it becomes essential, on the part of the three northern Crowns, to weigh maturely the nature of their engagements towards the Republic, and to resolve this question with the most perfect union and harmony.

THE system adopted by these powers is a system of perfect neutrality. It is only by following this system that they have a right to carry on a free commerce, which they have engaged themselves to protect, and to lend themselves mutual assistance. For this purpose,

pose, they have settled the obligations, and the aid they owe reciprocally to each other ; their marine armaments have been the consequence ; they tend to the offence of none. The men of war belonging to a neutral nation, the obligations and the advantages are the same on every side, but not with respect to a nation at war. It would be impossible to form a plan, it would be impossible to act in concert, without transgressing the limits prescribed by an exact neutrality, without overturning the system on which their union and engagements are founded.

NOTWITHSTANDING such a great difference between the situation of the three northern powers and that of the Republic of Holland, the latter has applied to the former by means of memoirs sent to the Courts of Stockholm, Petersburg, and Copenhagen, in which the States-General of the United Provinces implore their speedy and effectual assistance, by virtue of the Republic's accession to the conventions of Petersburg and Copenhagen, and
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in consequence of the engagements therein contained.

THE principal reason on which the Republic grounds its claim, consists in a combination of measures, which have distinguished the conduct of the Court of London,, seeming to indicate a resolution of that Court not to suffer the Republic to accede to the conventions of the northern powers. On account of this accession, the Republic has been involved in a war ; and, in consequence of the 7th, 8th, and 9th articles of the same conventions, the powers who have accepted its accession are obliged to come to the Republic's assistance.

By the extraordinary and violent proceedings of Great Britain towards the Republic ; by the extreme care which Lord Stormont took to prevent the declaration of the States-General from being delivered to him before his announcing the rupture to Count Welden ; by all that has preceded and followed this event, there is no room left to doubt of the motive that determined the Court of London.

don. However, this motive has by no means been alleged in the English declaration of war; there no mention is made but of facts previous to the resolution itself of the States-General with regard to the accession; and the 6th article of the conventions of Petersburg and Copenhagen bears, that the obligations of the contracting parties cannot be extended to things which may have happened before the signing of the said conventions; that is, they cannot have a retroactive effect. It is, therefore, now left to the choice of the three northern Crowns, either to adopt the sentiments of the States-General, together with the consequences drawn from them, or to adhere to the motives contained in the Court of London's declaration of war. In the *first* case, they must take an active part in the war, in favour of the Republic: In the *second* case, they may declare, if they think proper, by considering the quarrel of the Republic as foreign to the cause of the neutral powers, that the motives for its present difference had already existed before the accession took place. But both

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these methods seem to ly under great inconveniencies. In the *first* case, the advantages of the neutrality, the glorious end proposed by entering into this maritime association, must be sacrificed to plunge into all the horrors, and to suffer all the losses that are a natural consequence of a war. In the *second* case, it is exposing a striking weakness to the eyes of Europe, totally to abandon a state for fear of entering into formal engagements with it.

THEREFORE, between these extremes, there is but one medium, or, more properly speaking, there is but one expedient left, and it seems the beginning must be made with it. The event must then show how far it may lead, and what effect it will produce. This expedient seems to consist in a declaration which the three northern powers may think themselves authorised to make to the Court of London, the terms of which must be concerted among themselves, and in which they shall notify to the King of Great Britain that the Republic has acceded to their maritime conventions ;

ventions ; that they consider the Republic under this quality, as their ally, having the same cause to support, and the same rights to defend ; that the three northern Crowns do not mean to set themselves up as judges of the reasons which have induced his Britannic Majesty to declare war against the Republic ; but that they acknowledge themselves sincerely interested in the happiness and welfare of this State ; and that, in consequence of these sentiments, it is the wish of the allied Courts, that his Britannic Majesty would open a way for a reconciliation between him and the Republic ; that the three Courts would, in such case, employ all their good offices for terminating the differences in a friendly manner ; that they would think themselves doing mankind an essential service, if they could render this reconciliation general ; and that, in the mean time, they wish a beginning may be made by a cessation of hostilities on both sides, and putting things in the same situation they were in before the rupture. This step may be made according to agreement, either ver-

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bally or in writing, but separately, by the ministers of the three Courts residing at London. They must also agree among themselves on the time when they are to make these common representations, in order to give their steps more weight and force ; and, if this language be supported with naval armaments, which the northern Crowns are actually preparing, England may be expected to make some serious reflections on the matter : so much is at least certain, that the dignity of our Courts demands something to be done in favour of the Republic, considered as our ally ; and what may be thought equally necessary is, that this measure must bear, in the eyes of Europe, the marks of the motives and moderation, as well as of the resolution which has ever characterised the conduct of our Courts to the present time.

It cannot be foreseen whether the English Ministry will enter into a negociation, or only feign to incline towards it ; but, in both cases, we are of opinion, that the respective ministers

sters must be instructed not to depart from the proposal of a truce, that the Republic may, in the mean time, enjoy a free commerce, without which, they may answer, that they are not authorised to listen to any proposals of England; but that, if these conditions are granted, they shall take the proposals of that Court *ad referendum*. As to the objects of these demands, they shall be concerted with the Republic. The three northern Crowns shall reduce the whole to such points as shall be found just and reasonable; and they shall endeavour, by acting equally in concert, to oblige both the powers concerned to accept these conditions.

IF, during the course of such a negotiation, means are found of reconciling the other belligerent powers, the occasion must, without doubt, be eagerly seized, and every means used to bring about a general pacification, in which the general code of maritime laws for neutral nations must be established, which our Courts have already adopted, and the universal

ful confirmation of which will fulfil the wishes of all the world, and carry the glory of those Crowns, that have contributed towards it, to the highest pitch.

Stockholm, 17th Feb. }
1781. }

Translation

(I)

*Translation of a Rescript directed to Count Moussin
Poussikin, 1781.*

YOUR dispatches, and the communications of the Swedish minister, Baron de Nolken, have informed us, almost at once, both of the dispositions of the Court of Stockholm, with regard to the war which has broke out between the two maritime powers, and of his Swedish Majesty's desire to know our sentiments in this respect. Accustomed as we are to return, in full measure, the confidence of our allies, we shall depart the less from this rule in the present circumstances, where the consideration of our respective engagements, relative to the armed neutrality, must raise our attention and interest in the same degree. In consequence of which, you are authorised to explain yourself confidentially towards Count Scheffer, in order to inform his master, that, as soon as we had learned the sudden departure

departure of Sir Joseph York from the Hague, we hastened to make the strongest representations to the Court of London, in order to prevent it from commencing hostilities. We did not know that they were immediately to follow the minister's departure; but having been convinced of their beginning some days after, and finding that every step to prevent them would be useless, we had recourse to new measures, more adapted to the times and circumstances, and capable of extinguishing the flame of war in its birth. We have been instigated to that by a double motive, that of humanity suffering by the effusion of innocent blood, and that of the interest of neutral nations regarding their commerce with the belligerent powers: and although, after the formal requisition of the King of England made to us and the Emperor of the Romans, for our joint mediation, in order to make his peace with the Courts of France and Spain, there was some appearance at the opening of the negotiations; yet, as an explanation with the two Courts required time, in order to receive their mutual consent, we have thought
fit

fit to take a shorter way for reconciling England and Holland, by offering them, for this end, our separate mediation. Our intention thereby was to remove, from their particular reconciliation, every object of discussion foreign to the purpose; and especially the question on the independence of America, which would have raised the greatest difficulties. The States-General have accepted our offer with thanks, and with a great desire of profiting by it, as you will see in the annexed. England, on the contrary, has declined it, by referring its reconciliation with the Republic to a future general negotiation of peace under the joint mediation of the two imperial Courts: when such an event takes place, we shall not fail to labour, both by ourselves, and by drawing, in like manner, his Imperial Majesty into the Republic's interest, that it may be comprised, at least, in the general pacification. After having given the States-General these assurances, we have promised them, at the same time, to concert in a friendly manner with our allies, about a new effort which we shall, jointly and unanimously, make at the

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Court

Court of London, in order to persuade it to terms of moderation, and to a love of peace.

WE have the less hesitated giving their High Mightinesses these assurances, as we met with a decided resolution of the King of Sweden to take such a step, in the memoir of the 17th February, communicated to us by Baron Nollen, and of which we give you a copy at the end of this for your own information. The contents of this memoir prove, on one side, the profound penetration of that Prince, and, on the other, the perfect agreement of his way of thinking with ours. *Indeed, the time and circumstances in which Great Britain attacks its old ally, the Republic of Holland, sufficiently indicate, that the true cause of the hostilities lies in the accession of the States-General to our maritime conventions; and the more so, as thereby the Republic secured its navigation and trading industry of its subjects, which was, for the most part, carried on in favour of the enemies of England.*

BUT

BUT, on the other hand, it is no less true, that the rupture was previous to the formal accession of their High Mightinesses to the conventions of Copenhagen and Peterburgh; and that the motives which have been made public are anterior to that period, and have no connection at all with the cause of the allies of the armed neutrality. In the first part of this reasoning, the 7th, 8th, and 9th articles are entirely in favour of the Dutch; but the sixth article discharges us, in terms equally clear, from all obligations of entering into a war with England. So essential a difference, in the stipulations of these conventions, leaves the three allied Crowns at liberty to take the most advantageous part, and that most adapted to their interest.

NOTHING can be better founded, or is wiser, than the determination of that delicate choice adopted in the Swedish memoir: there the inconveniencies of every party are discussed and presented under their proper point of view, and the best means shown of guarding against them. When we adopted these

means, which consist in a perfect neutrality, as a rule for the conduct of the three Crowns during the new war between the maritime powers, we did not fail to give the Courts of Stockholm and Copenhagen early notice of the orders delivered to our commanding sea-officers, to consider the Republic of the United Provinces as a neutral power with regard to the two branches of the House of Bourbon, and belligerent with respect to England. We are counting the hours, and expecting with eagerness to hear from you, and the counselor of state M. Sacken, that the kings, our allies, have given similar orders in their dominions, that all our actions and all our steps may be entirely and every where perfectly uniform, and be the proof of that intimate alliance which must at last establish, for ages to come, the beneficial system of neutral navigation and trade.

HAVING thus secured what we owe to the good of our States, in preference to all other foreign interest, we shall not fail, as above said, to employ, in favour of the Republic,

all

all means that may be found compatible with the first of our duties. We consequently adhere, with all our heart, to the idea of his Swedish Majesty, of making, in the joint name of the three allied Courts, a proper representation to that of London. *In the Swedish memoir, there is mention made of a declaration ; but this is of such a nature as may draw us beyond our intentions ; whereas a simple insinuation, made by word of mouth, which may express the same thing, and that with the same force too, cannot engage us to any thing against our will and desire.* This observation, as simple as it is essential, cannot escape the penetration of Count Scheffer, with whom you are to agree on the terms in which this representation is to be couched, on the time when it is to be made at London, and the manner in which our respective ministers at that Court are to acquit themselves of it.

WE would have made no difficulty to accept the terms proposed in the above-mentioned memoir, as we found them very moderate, and adapted to the end of this measure ;
but

but that the circumstances, which are now notorious at the Court of Stockholm, seemed to demand some alterations ; for this purpose, you will find, at the end of this, a new project of a representation, and not of a declaration, which you are to communicate to Count Scheffer, telling him, that, in order to be better understood by the English Ministry, it may be delivered in writing, *but always on condition that it is only to be considered as a verbal insinuation.* We have no objections if the Court of Sweden, or that of Denmark, for particular considerations of their own, think fit to make use of other terms, or of another style: it is enough if the substance be the same, and if it be the means of determining the English Ministry to pay a greater regard to the good advice of the three sovereign Courts.

The language and the conduct of the former denote clearly, that only the fear of involving their country in a war with all Europe, and that of exposing themselves to a personal account, can determine them to listen to a reasonable peace: It would, without doubt, contribute towards rendering them more flexible, to keep
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up and nourish that fear of theirs. The particular circumstance, that all the sovereigns are keeping a part of their naval forces in readiness, offers a very effectual means to that purpose, and that at a very little expence; if the Swedish and Danish squadrons fix their cruise, for some time, without the Sound, while we, on our side, keep one squadron in the Mediterranean, and another in the northern ocean, in order to protect our ships there, as we did last year, against all foreign privateers; and as our squadrons, that passed the last winter at Leghorn and Lisbon, are ordered back, or are already on their voyage home to the Baltic, in order to second this double equipment, we present, in this manner, at once a very respectable force in different seas. The possibility of the Russian, Swedish, and Danish squadrons, joining at the first order of their sovereigns, cannot fail of overawing all the belligerent powers, and of securing, at the same time, the trade and navigation of our respective subjects. Thus, such a junction, without even taking place, will be of a very great and real advantage to the three Courts. We have sent an extract of this re-
script

script to M. Sacken, and charged him to explain his sentiments on its contents towards the Danish Ministry, and to give us a speedy account of the result of his conference. He is ordered to inform you directly of it, in order to gain thereby as much time as possible for putting the joint and unanimous measures, to be concerted between us, in execution, and for the better enabling us to provide our minister at London with necessary instructions, which, together with those that our allies will deliver to their ministers at the same Court, may prove sufficient for the purpose. We add here a copy of the rescript sent to the said M. Sacken. You are to communicate it to the Swedish minister, and to insist with him, that his Court may enter into a direct communication with that of Copenhagen, in order equally to gain time. As we are far from meaning to lay any constraint on the will and intentions of the Kings our allies, in a cause common to us all, you are, on the overtures of the Swedish Ministry, to enquire conjointly with it, into the true sentiments of that Court,

Court, and to take, *ad referendum*, all the proposals it may think proper to make; assuring it before hand, that we shall pay every regard thereto, and every deference that may depend on us.

Extract

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(K)

*Extract of a Letter from Count Panin to H. Sacken the
Russian Minister at Copenhagen.*

1st, THAT, after the ratifications were exchanged by the Russian minister, the Swedish envoy, and the Chargé d' Affaires of Denmark, orders have been given to the Empress's ministers at Madrid and Paris, to deliver, in conjunction with the minister of Denmark, Sweden, and Holland, the note agreed on to declare the accession of the Republic of Holland, in the same manner that was observed with the two conventions of Copenhagen and Petersburg.

2^{dly}, THAT M. Simolin is charged to execute the same commission with the ministers of Denmark and Sweden, and afterwards to add, either verbally, or in writing, if the English Ministry should demand it, that, on account of the hostilities that have broke out between the Crown of Great Britain and the
Republic

Republic of the United Provinces, the Empress has ordered her Admiralty to consider the Republic of Holland as a neutral power with respect to the two Courts of Bourbon, and belligerent with regard to England, as the motives published by the latter, that gave rise to the hostilities, are entirely foreign to, and have nothing common with, the convention : That she is convinced that this step is received by the Court of England as a new proof of her impartiality, and of the innocence of her alliance, which has no other end but the protection of commerce and the rights of neutral nations, and which neither she nor her allies mean to change into an offensive measure, as long as neither she nor they are forced to do so by a hatred towards their principles, or by effectual attempts to counteract them : That the Empress did likewise flatter herself, that the Court of London, in consideration of her good will to finish the differences that are arisen between it and a power that was, for so long a time, its friend and ally, would do justice to the friendship of the Empress, and remove all suspicions, as if,

among the motives of the rupture with Holland, the principal one had been the eagerness of the Republic to join the alliance of the neutral powers. The orders delivered to the Imperial Admiralty, together with the separate article, are to the following purport :—

1st, ALL the Dutch merchant-ships are to be treated by the squadrons of ships of war and separate frigates, on the same footing with the Danish and Swedish vessels, according to the order of the 19th October 1780, because the Republic is actually become a principal and immediate party in all the rights, prerogatives, and obligations of the two maritime conventions of Copenhagen and Petersburgh.

2^{dly}, THIS general rule has, however, its exceptions, on account of the war between the Republic and Great Britain, which attacked it before its signing the act of accession to the two conventions, alleging, for this rupture, reasons that have no connection with the convention.

5^{dly},

3dly, In consideration of this important event, where the neutrality does no more exist, neither the Empress, nor her allies the Kings of Sweden and Denmark, are by any means obliged to enter into an effective defence of the Dutch navigation against the English.

4thly, On the other hand, this engagement subsists, in all its extent, against the French and Spaniards, with whom the Dutch have conventions and stipulations at full length concerning prohibited goods, which must also very naturally serve as a rule for the conduct of the ships; for which end, a copy of these conventions has been delivered to the Admiralty, together with other naval papers, that prove the property of Dutch vessels: And,

5thly, A copy of the separate explaining article concluded between the Courts of Denmark and England, has in like manner been delivered to the Admiralty for its information.

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The Substance of the Answer which his Excellency Count Panin gave to Baron de Nolken, Minister of Sweden, on the five Points of which he had demanded some Explanation.

To the *first* point, that every ship of war, belonging to either of the allied powers, is obliged to protect every merchant-ship that produces clear and true proofs of having no prohibited goods on board.

To the *second* point, That every one of the allied powers shall indiscriminately protect the commerce of the other ; but that, in order to facilitate this protection, they shall agree on certain stations, where the squadrons of every one of the allied powers are to be kept in readiness, and which are to be fixed upon in such a manner that the squadrons may be able to form, as it were, a chain, and to give one another assistance in time of necessity.

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To the *third*, If the squadrons happen to meet one another, they are to give one another all kind of friendly assistance ; and the ceremony of saluting is to be observed according to custom.

To the *fourth*, It belongs to the minister of the injured power to make the first representation against the wrongs and proceedings of the privateers, which representations shall be warmly and efficaciously supported by the ministers of all the other powers.

To the *fifth*, In case one of the allied powers should, of its own accord, commence hostilities, or mean to declare itself in favour of any of the powers at war, such power shall be, *ipso facto*, excluded from the association : If, on the contrary, any one of the powers at war should, from some particular animosity against one of the allied Crowns, insult its flag, or commit hostilities, the other shall confer with it on proper and effectual measures for rendering themselves more respected.

Extract

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Extract of an official Dispatch from the Court of Denmark to M. Schumacher, its Chargé d' Affaires at Petersburgh.

I TAKE for the basis of all our operations a grand fleet stationed in the Channel, and then I think the following the proper means that are to be observed at the Court where you are :—

1st, BEFORE all things, the grand fleet being thus stationed, the contracting powers are to agree on the number of ships that every one is to send, and on every thing relative thereto.

2^{dly}, THEY shall get the King of Prussia, and the Emperor, &c. &c. to approve of the heads of the Russian declaration as soon as possible.

3^{dly},

3dly, IN case the peace should not take place this winter, and the war be continued the summer following, the wise and prudent Count Panin will not fail, as soon as the fleet has taken its station, to make the most pressing and serious instances with the Court of London, in order to determine it to a declaration conform to that of the Courts of Versailles and Madrid; for it is certain that the Court of London has nothing else in view than to elude the plans and efforts of Russia, to gain time, and to seize the opportunity of a lucky moment to take revenge. You, ask me, Sir, why I think the Empress harbours such designs? I answer you, because Russia seems to have a mind to fit out a great fleet, while a very moderate number of vessels would be enough for the security of neutral navigation. The object is really worth the while, if the design is, to turn the embarrassment of England to the common good of mankind.

4thly, Should England refuse to comply with this system of equity, then recourse must

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be had to menaces, remonstrances, reprisals, and other disagreeable means that may serve to justify such beneficial and vast designs. I never can think, that England should mean to stand it out against a fleet of 50 sail.

5thly, This point being once gained by a vigorous and unforeseen blow, there remains nothing more, but to digest and form the code of maritime laws, which cannot be done with more impartiality, than under the eyes of the benefactress of Europe, and under the direction of her great minister. This code shall pass into a law at the future pacification. In the mean time, a less numerous fleet will be sufficient to watch the English and Spaniards, and to make them respect the heads of the declaration. *I dread the English*, and the incertitude of the time to come: I do not trust convoys, nor dispersed forces, neither do I think that the Union of the allied Powers will be of a long standing. The iron must be struck while it is hot: with the Empress at the head, every thing may be done,

done, every thing may be obtained, her threats alone made the peace of Teschen; but if there be any question of a greater equipment for the next year, I beg you to direct matters in such a manner, that we be informed of the proposal in the month of November.

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Note

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Note from the Court of Denmark, to Prussia.

IT was with the most perfect satisfaction, that the king learned his Prussian Majesty's desire of taking part in the beneficial system of Neutrality; the principles of which, drawn from the primitive law of nations, have been exposed in the declaration of her Majesty, the Empress, dated February the 28th 1780; and his Prussian majesty has resolved to guarantee them, for the better support of these principles, by means of a formal act concluded for this effect, with her Imperial Majesty; the friendly communication of which, his Prussian Majesty was pleased to make to the King, and the latter received with the most sincere thanks.

Penetrated

Penetrated with the equity and justice of these very principles, the King himself has established and claimed them in the declaration which he ordered to be sent the 8th of July 1780, to the belligerent Courts; and for their support, his Majesty has concluded a maritime convention, signed at Copenhagen the 9th of July, with her Majesty the Empress of Russia, which he here notifies to his Prussian Majesty with great pleasure.

These principles being alone capable of establishing the security of commerce, and of the navigation of neutral nations, the king cannot but ardently desire to see them acknowledged by all the Powers of Europe, and to feel, in consequence of this desire, all the importance of their being adopted by his Prussian Majesty.

Nothing would therefore be more conform to the wishes of his Majesty, than to hear that it pleased his Prussian Majesty to accede to this convention, such as it was concluded
between

between the Courts of Denmark and Russia, in which case his Majesty would contribute, on his side, as far as possible, towards facilitating all the dispositions concerning the stipulations that are to be put into the room of those contained in the 4th and 5th articles of this convention; whereby, the high contracting parties promise themselves mutual protection, and while they expressly determine the common efforts and reciprocal assistance, the tie of this alliance is formed in the most natural manner, and every one made to partake both of all that is essential in the obligations and advantages resulting from their Union.

Never was the object more important, or the end of an alliance more glorious, than that which was the soul of her Imperial Majesty's resolutions, when she proposed to the other powers of the North this respectable convention, which must one day produce the maritime code promised by that great princess, to the whole Universe: This alliance has nothing in view, but the preservation of rights,
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the dearest and most precious to mankind; and who could be more capable of promoting them, than a Sovereign of so consummate wisdom, as his Prussian Majesty is, whose influence on the affairs of Europe, is so extensive, and whose friendship is so justly courted?

THIS is what the King ordered the underwritten to say in answer to the note delivered by Mr de Bismark, dated the 15th of August.

FROM the Royal department for Foreign affairs, Copenhagen the 17th of December, 1781.

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*The Court of Sweden's answer to the King of Prussia's
minister at Stockholm.*

THE King being informed of the act passed the 8th of May, of the present year between the Courts of Petersburg and Berlin, felt, with an extreme satisfaction, how much strength the beneficial system of the navigation and trade of neutral nations, was about to gain by the engagements which his Prussian Majesty had lately contracted, and by which he concurs to support the principles already adopted, and generally announced on the part of the King and his allies.

His Majesty felt no less satisfaction when he heard that his Prussian Majesty had a mind to extend these very engagements, by rendering them common with those of his Majesty; and as nothing can be added to the maritime

maritime convention concluded last year July the 21st—August 1st, between the Courts of Sweden and Russia, his Majesty would be very glad, if his Prussian Majesty was pleased to accede to the same convention; in which case, his Majesty would do every thing in his power to facilitate the arrangements concerning the stipulations that are to be substituted by his Prussian Majesty, instead of those contained in the 4th and 5th articles of the convention, whereby the mutual protection is fixed which the allies have promised to give one another; and the ties of this alliance could not be rendered stronger, than by expressly determining the reciprocal assistance to which the high contracting parties bind themselves, and thus making every one partake both of the essential obligations and advantages of this union.

If the chief object of the convention concluded between the Sovereigns of the North consists in the conservation of the dearest and most precious rights of mankind;—if these powers

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see the necessity of taking all possible care to establish a code of maritime laws, in which these rights are settled in favour of the neutral nations ;—nothing can be more conform to so great and glorious a design, than that his Prussian Majesty should employ all the influence, which he has so justly acquired in the affairs of Europe ; nothing can be more conformable to the King's wishes, than to multiply the ties with which he is already so firmly attached to his Prussian Majesty.—This is what the subscribed is ordered to declare, in answer to the note delivered by Baron de Keller, and dated the 20th April of the present year.

Done at Stockholm, the 5th of December 1783.

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Copy of a Note, delivered by his Excellency Count Scheffer, to Baron de Keller, Prussian Envoy. Stockholm, the 2d of May 1782.

WHEN the King granted, last year, to the subjects of his Prussian Majesty, the protection which that Monarch desired, for the security of their commerce and navigation, his Majesty, with a real satisfaction, seized the opportunity of shewing, at the same time, his attachment to the principles of free neutral navigation, which he has constantly followed, together with the sentiments of personal regard and friendship for his Majesty the King of Prussia. His Majesty having afterwards been invited to join the act passed at Peterf-burg the 8th of May 1781, between his Prussian Majesty and the Empress of Russia, there could be no question but about choosing the manner the most simple, and the most natural

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to the engagements which his Majesty was going to contract. The King, in consequence, proposed to his Majesty the King of Prussia, to join the Maritime Convention, formerly, and since the year 1780, concluded between the King and her Imperial Majesty of Russia, by observing the different obligations which the different situations of the two kingdoms should render necessary.

BUT the King of Prussia having, by the means of a second note, which was delivered by the subscribed by his Envoy, intimated a desire, for reasons contained in the same note, of joining the above mentioned act of the 8th of May 1781, his Majesty thought himself obliged to consult nothing but his friendship for the King, together with the advantage which must accrue to the system of free neutral commerce, by the accession of a Prince, whose credit and importance are so universally established. In consequence, the King has ordered the subscribed to notify to Baron de Keller, in answer to his note of the 22d of February,

February, that the King is resolved to comply with the desire of his Prussian Majesty: In conformity of which, he must, in like manner, inform Baron de Keller, that Baron de Nolken, the King's Envoy extraordinary at the Court of Petersburg, will immediately receive his orders for acceding by the means of formal declarations from his Majesty, to the act concluded in this city, the 8th of May last year; and, in consequence of the friendship subsisting between the two Crowns, the subscribed has the honour of subjoining here the copies of those declarations which Baron de Nolken will be ordered to deliver on one side, to the minister of her Imperial Majesty of all the Russias, and on the other to Count de Goertz, his Prussian Majesty's Envoy extraordinary residing at the said Court; on condition, that the acts of acceptance which may be found necessary for carrying so beneficial a work to perfection, be delivered by the two respective Courts to Baron de Nolken.

His

His Majesty feels the greater pleasure in answering, on this occasion, the desire of the King his uncle, as he hopes, that this new union will strengthen the ties of friendship by which the two Sovereigns are already, in so many respects, united.

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Project of a Declaration, to serve as an Act of Accession to the Treaty concluded at Petersburgh, between his Majesty the King of Prussia, and her Majesty the Empress of all the Russias, the 8th of May 1787.

WE, Christian the seventh, by the Grace of God King of Denmark and Norway, &c. &c. make known, that, from the beginning of the present naval war, having always had the support of free navigation and commerce at heart, and being ever seriously concerned for so beneficial a design, both by granting an effectual protection to the commerce of our subjects, and in forming, with several other powers, animated with the same sentiments, such engagements as might tend to establish the liberty of the seas, founded in the law of nations, it could not be without great satisfaction, that we were informed of his Prussian Majesty's desire of contributing towards the establishment

establishment of a work, so glorious, and so advantageous to all Europe. Our satisfaction was the more perfect, as we have seen, by the friendly communication of the act passed between his Majesty the King of Prussia and the Empress of all the Russias, May the 8th 1781, for the protection of free neutral trade and navigation, that the principles on which that act is founded, are, in every respect, entirely conform to those which we had before established, both by the convention concluded between us and the Empress of Russia, at Copenhagen, the 9th of July 1780, and by our accession to the treaties separately signed by that Sovereign with his Majesty the King of Sweden and the States General of the United Provinces, July the 22d, and November the 4th, 1780.

IN consequence of these very sentiments, and of our constant and inviolable friendship towards his Majesty the King of Prussia, having been invited to accede, as principal contracting party, to the aforesaid act, we declare,

declare and certify, by these presents, that we accede, in best form, as a principal contracting party, to the act concluded at Petersburg, the 8th of May 1781; and we engage ourselves, for us and our successors, to all the stipulations contained in the clauses and articles, as well as in the four separate articles which are added to it, and to which we likewise accede in all their form and tenor; willing and intending, by this our formal act of accession and acceptance, to take upon ourselves the defence and support of the liberty and security of all lawful trade carried on by the subjects of his Prussian Majesty, to the same extent as we support and defend that of our own subjects.

WE are moreover determined, in case any of the contracting parties should be exposed to any violent attacks, or other inconveniences in hatred of the foresaid act, and of our present accession, or in consequence of principles contrary to those that are therein contained, to concert immediately, and in conjunction with the King of Prussia, according to our engagements

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gements with the other powers that have taken part in the neutral system, to make choice of the means, the most proper and the best adapted to the situation of our kingdoms, to procure all justice and due satisfaction to the party aggrieved.

FINALLY, we expect that his Majesty the king of Prussia, shall in like manner declare, by means of a formal act, his having received and accepted our present declaration, thus acknowledging us as one of the principal contracting parties, relative to the aforesaid act of the 8th of May 1781; and that he shall promise to fulfil punctually, with regard to us, all the engagements which we have contracted by this our present declaration. In faith of which &c.

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*Memoir from the King of Sweden to the Empress of Russia,
sent directly along with a private Letter.*

IF the ties, which the King has had the satisfaction of forming with her Majesty the Empress of Russia, during the course of the present war, for the support of the cause of neutral nations, could not but be infinitely dear to him, on account of the *zealous* and lasting advantages which this association must produce for all nations, and by reason of the honour of partaking with that Sovereign, the glory which must so justly accrue to him; these very ties are no less precious to him, because they furnish him with opportunities of giving her Imperial Majesty, and of receiving from her, marks of that entire confidence, the result of the intimacy which subsists between the two Sovereigns, and of the perfect harmony of their mutual interest. The King has

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received a new proof of it, by the friendship which her Majesty had for him, in consulting him on the measures to be taken with regard to the republic of Holland, supposing it should continue to decline entering into a particular peace with England, even if the latter could be prevailed with to settle the basis, or the principles of the armed neutrality to be declared and avowed to all the neutral powers. His Majesty thinks it impossible to shew his thankfulness for her Majesty's confidence, by which he was so sensibly affected, in a clearer manner, than by answering it with all that sincerity which true friendship demands, and which nothing but true friendship alone can inspire. All Europe has acknowledged, in the measures of which her Imperial Majesty has taken since the breaking out of the war between England and Holland, towards establishing the peace between these two powers, the sentiments that animate all the actions of that Sovereign, her desire of procuring the good of mankind, in general, and that of her allies in particular. The King has followed and applauded these measures, with all that interest he ever
feels

feels when the Empress's glory is concerned. He was persuaded that her Imperial Majesty, having considered the state and situation of the republic of Holland, must have found, by her great spirit of penetration, with which she is always sure of seeing things in their proper light, new reasons for augmenting her desire, which the goodness of her heart first inspired, of bringing a peace about beneficial for England, but necessary for Holland. Indeed, one needs only to cast his eyes on the situation the republic was in, before England's declaration of war, to convince himself how much this event was to its disadvantage, and how fatal it may still prove to its flourishing state, its extensive and lucrative commerce, the fruits both of a long peace and its natural industry ; in a word, every thing contributed to render a war formidable to an independant republic, enjoying all the advantages which had been secured to it by the several treaties of commerce, concluded between it and the belligerent powers ; in which state, its breaking with England was a true misfortune for the republic ; and it seems the little solidity of reasons that occasion
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the rupture, serves to render its case more interesting. One cannot but plainly see that a simple project of a treaty of commerce; a treaty which must needs presuppose the independance of the American States being acknowledged by England, because it can never have any effect before that period, is but a weak reason for breaking with an old friend and ally; if this reason be maturely weighed, by an equitable posterity, it cannot fail of being considered as a pretext for covering the dissatisfaction of a rival nation, in point of trade, and of a ministry which is accustomed to let itself be hurried away into impetuous measures. These truths can as little escape the enlightened wisdom of her Imperial Majesty, as they can fail of affecting her heart, the first emotion of which led her to concert means for preventing the evils with which the République was threatened, by procuring to it a speedy peace. It was a new misfortune for Holland, that England would not at that time answer the generous views of the Empress; and if the Republic saw itself thereby deprived of the effects of her Majesty's

jeſty's good-will, nevertheless, by what has ſince happened, the Republic muſt be perſuaded, that it owes her Imperial Majeſty laſting thanks for her intentions in its favour. It is, indeed, difficult to imagine a more fatal change than that which the ſituation of the Republic has experienced, by a war of ſo ſhort a duration. With the loſs of an immense commerce, its only ſtrength, its principal reſource, it has forfeited alſo a conſiderable fiſhery, which alone was worth a mine of gold to it. Its colonies in America have been attacked, and nobody even knows in whoſe hands they may be at preſent. The greater part of its poſſeſſions in the Eaſt Indies, conquered and preſerved with ſo great expences and cares, are loſt to it: And, in fine, to render its miſfortunes complete, it ſees itſelf blocked up, the greater part of the year, in its own harbours, and its veſſels hindered from going in or out. The natural effect of all thoſe accumulated calamities has been, to draw the Republic into the neceſſity of ſiding more cloſely with France, againſt the common enemy, and to ſtrengthen the ties which alone are its reſource

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resource during the war, and must procure its security at the peace. It was under the necessity of throwing itself so entirely into the arms of that power, that little is wanting to render it entirely dependent on France ; and the demolition of the barrier towns has completed a system which the necessity of war had begun. Thus, by a series of disagreeable circumstances, the Republic finds itself out of condition to accept the benefits which her Imperial Majesty has never ceased to offer it, and which its enemy has hindered it from turning to its advantage, at the time when it might have been able to do so. If we suppose it possible, however, to remove the obstacles which are at present in the way of a separate peace between England and Holland, it would then become the province of the Empress, as mediatrix between the two powers, to weigh in the scales of natural equity, if the Republic is to make its peace without being replaced almost into the same state as before the war breaking out, without being put in possession of its colonies and *comptoirs* in the East

the East and West Indies, and without receiving some indemnification, for the immense losses caused by the stopping of its commerce only. It is true, England proposes the renewing of the treaty of 1674. It even offers to acknowledge, with regard to the republic, those principles which have been adopted by the northern powers; and this last offer is without doubt a very favourable omen for these powers, but it is not yet generally made known; and even, supposing it to be so, would that be enough for the Dutch? This is a point on which the King entirely suspends his opinion: He has not taken the defence of their cause upon himself, nor does he intend to plead it here: the only thing he means to show, is, that a particular peace between England and Holland will be incomparably more difficult to bring about at the present juncture, than it was immediatly after the breaking out of the war; that is to say, at the time, the Empress made her first offers of mediation.

THE King saw, with regret, the obstacles that opposed the glorious design to which the

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Empress's philanthropy, and her benevolent spirit, had prompted her; and a just acknowledgment of the confidence she shewed him, and his friendship for her person, oblige him to present those obstacles to the eyes of her Imperial Majesty, in the same light in which he sees them himself; but at the same time, his Majesty finds, to his still greater pleasure, in the known sentiments and good offices which her Imperial Majesty has already offered for a general pacification, and in the association of the Northern Powers, the sufficient means of fully attaining, in the present circumstances, the glorious aim which her Imperial Majesty and her allies have proposed to themselves; and, by one or the other of these measures, his Majesty feels a true satisfaction in being able to disclose his sentiments on these subjects towards her Imperial Majesty, with all that confidence which her great penetration and her perfect friendship, so precious to his Majesty, inspires him with.

It is evident, that since the change that took place last Spring in the English Ministry, affairs

affairs are greatly hastening towards a general pacification. France and England, both alike tired of an expensive war, seeing themselves stopped by the circumstance of America's independency, an object which the former must absolutely insist upon, and the late English Ministry always obstinately refused to comply with; but that obstacle seeming to be removed, by the sentiments which the following ministry announced, and the present appears to have equally adopted, a direct negotiation was soon opened at Paris. It is true, that the expences of the present campaign, the desire of seeing its issue, and the interest of the French allies, especially Spain, may probably stop the speedy effect of this negotiation for a moment, but the campaign being once finished, it may greatly be presumed that matters will soon be settled, and the more so, as the expedition which Spain is going to undertake against Gibraltar, must by that time either have succeeded or failed.

IN this state of affairs, it seems less to be feared that the belligerent powers will re-

fuse making their peace, than it is to be dreaded that they will finish their differences of their own accord, and without the intervention of any one whoever. It is clear how prejudicial such a peace may prove to the cause of the neutral powers, a cause which her Imperial Majesty, together with the King and her other allies, have so gloriously supported, and hitherto with so much success. One must be persuaded that England never cordially approved of the principles adopted in the convention of the armed neutrality, and if the House of Bourbon, seemed less inclined to oppose them, yet their object is too foreign to its interest, that one should expect its meddling with them in an essential manner at a peace where France will have so many concerns, infinitely dearer to it to settle.

EVERY thing seems therefore, in this juncture, to invite her Imperial Majesty, the Empress of Russia, and her allies, to crown, by a step which has all appearance of proving decisive, the noble and glorious efforts which they have never ceased to make for settling
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the rights of neutral nations on a solid, and immoveable basis. To this end the King proposes his opinion to the great penetration of the Empress, that the only effectual means of gaining this point, would be, that her Imperial Majesty, together with all the allies that have taken a part in the maritime convention, should propose to the belligerent powers the establishing of the congress, in which the different concerns both of the powers at war, and of the neutral states, should be examined and terminated. The Emperor of the Romans having hitherto shared the trouble which her Majesty the Empress gave herself for the general pacification, and being besides tied to the concerns of the naval powers, associated for the support of the liberty of trade, by engagements which that Prince has on that account entered into with the Empress, will certainly receive with joy every overture that her majesty would make to him for joining the northern powers in such a step. His mediation already offered, his power and his credit with the different states at war cannot fail of giving his representations a great weight, and of accelerating the
success

success of two objects which are proposed by a congress, viz. the pacification, and the settling of a maritime code of Laws. For the same end, the King leaves it to the Empress's decision, whether it would not be fit to employ her credit with the King of Prussia, to engage that Prince to espouse, with all that warmth which the importance of the subject requires, the concerns of the common cause : this would be nothing more than a consequence drawn from those principles which made him desire entering into the association of the maritime powers : and his great personal qualities, together with that consideration which he has so deservedly acquired by them, would render every step that he should take effectually advantageous to the general good.

It is easy to foresee what effect an effort made of a sudden, and at the same time, by the mightiest states of Europe, must inevitably have on the belligerent powers. This impression will be the stronger, as they cannot but soon feel that what is proposed to them is by no means

means against their interest, nor can have any noxious influence on it. On the contrary, the projected congress seems to be of such a nature, as must render it agreeable to the whole world. The plenipotentiaries of the states at war, seeing themselves assembled in one and the same place, will examine and finish with greater easiness the differences of their courts. Should any one of the neutral power be accepted to execute the office of mediator between any of the belligerent powers, or among them all in general, that court will employ all its endeavours to accomplish its task. The rest may watch over their cause, and, by this means, a double advantage will be gained, the settling of a solid peace, and the establishing of maritime laws, with all that splendor and all that security, with which those of the German Empire were fixed by the treaty of Westphalia; and by this the aim will be attained, which her Majesty and her allies ever had in view by their maritime convention, and to which all their steps have been constantly directed; and a glorious and useful work

work will be finished, which will ever claim the gratitude of future ages.

It is clear that, in order to arrive at a general and a lasting peace, in the present circumstances, the plenipotentiaries of the United Provinces of America must be called to the congress; but this article cannot give rise to any difficulty, as England can have no more repugnance to treat with them, since the British ministers have loudly exclaimed against the obstinacy of the late ministry, in endeavouring to reduce North America; and those who are at present in place, declare, that they never will refuse acknowledging its independency.

If the plan which the King proposes be adopted, nothing will remain, but to determine the terms in which the proposals are to be couched, and they will be easily agreed upon; and the necessary instructions in consequence given to the ministers residing at the belligerent courts. The King is of opinion, that it is impossible to give these proposals too great weight, and that it would be therefore essential

tial to have them made at the same time to every one of these Courts, by the ministers of all those powers that contributed towards that work. It will be likewise easy to agree on the place where the Congress is to be held; Aix la Chapelle, Mentz, Francfort, or any other free imperial town, the nearest that is possible for all those who may have any thing to do there, will serve the turn.

THE King expects, with a great deal of concern, to hear her Imperial Majesty's sentiments on the plan which he has laid before her eyes; but whatever they be, his Majesty is persuaded, that the Empress must find in it a proof of his tender friendship, his perfect confidence, his love of their mutual glory, and his invariable adherence to principles which he prides himself in having constantly followed with her Imperial Majesty.

DONE at DROTTRINGHOLM, the 7th of
August, 1782.

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*Note for Baron d' Albedyhill, the King of Sweden's
Chargé des affaires at Petersburg.*

THE Empress was very sensible of the confidence and cordiality with which his Majesty the King of Sweden explained himself towards her, in a note lately delivered by his chargè des affaires, on the present situation of Europe.

HER Majesty, entirely convinced that nothing can be added to the judicious reflections, and to the choice of the means proposed by the King, with respect to the grand aim of a general pacification, and the consolidation of the neutral system which was so happily founded by their united efforts, can assure his Swedish Majesty, that nothing relating hereto has escaped his attention.

THE Empress has ever been engaged, down to the present time, in concert with the Emperor

peror of the Romans, her co-mediator, and her co-partner, by his accession to the same principles, with the essential task of protecting the rights of neutral nations; and she will certainly omit nothing, at the conclusion of a general peace between the belligerent powers, which may add force to the said system, and render it of a permanent duration, and to make it pass over by the consent and accession of those very powers to it, into a general law for all the nations.

As for the rest, the King's zealous sentiments in favour of the same concerns, his impartiality, his penetration, which are so well known to the Empress, leave her Majesty no room, to doubt, that in time and place, his Swedish Majesty will be pleased to co-operate with all his force towards the forwarding of the common cause, and to bring it to a good and happy end.

Done at ST PETERSBURG, the 7th of
September, 1782.

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COPIES SUR LES ORIGINAUX.

(A)

De la Cour de Peterbourg, à celle de Madrid.

LE Consul de l' Imperatrice à Cadix, avoit à peine eu le tems de donner Connoissance à sa cour de la resolution inattendue de celle de Madrid, d'amener tous les bâtimens neutres, destinés vers la Mediterranée, dans ce port, et d'y vendre au plus offrant leurs charges, sans le consentement et la participation, non seulement des propriétaires, mais même des consuls de leurs nations y residens; qu'il fut formé des plaintes formelles de differens sujets Russes sur ces entraves mises au commerce, et à la sureté commune qui en fait la base.

TANDIS-

TANDISQUE quelques uns en effuyent déjà les funestes effets, d'autres justement allarmés, se voyent arrêtés dans leurs speculations, et reduits à abandonner les projets sensés, formés dans des vues également avantageuses pour eux et l'Empire dont ils sont sujets. Du nombre des premiers, se trouve la maison de commerce des Sieurs Ruitger, Van Briénen, fils et compagnie, etablie à Archangel; elle avoit chargé pour son propre compte, de moitié avec celle de Hoppe et Comp. à Amsterdam, sous la raison de cette derniere, le vaisseau Concor dia, Capitaine Hans Jansen, de quatre mille muids de froment. Il estoit d'abord destiné pour Lisbonne, d'où il devoit se rendre à Barcelone, de là à Marseille, Gênes, ou Livourne, suivant sa convenance, et en se reglant sur le prix de cette denrée, et sur la probabilité du gain, comme cela s'est pratiqué en tous tems parmi les Negociants. Tels estoient les termes du contract passé avec le Capitaine du vaisseau, qui, avant qu'il eût eu le tems de lever l'ancre, fut instruit par ses commettans sur des avis qui leur estoient venus de la disette de froment

à Barcelone, d'y diriger immédiatement sa route : en conséquence, le vaisseau mit à la voile pour Barcelone, et poursuivit son voyage jusqu' au détroit de Gibraltar, où il se trouva arrêté par une Chebeque Espagnole, sans qu'il fût donné la plus légère attention ni à sa destination, ni à sa charge, qui appartenait incontestablement à des propriétaires neutres. On le conduisit au contraire à Cadix, où toute cette charge a été vendue à l'encan, à quatorze mille pesos de moins qu'elle n'auroit produit au prix courant de Barcelone.

IL y a des avis sur d'autres infractions, commises également contre la sûreté générale du commerce, et en particulier au détriment des sujets Russes, mais dont on n'a pas encore appris le détail.

SA Majesté Impériale n'a pu voir, sans surprise, la Cour de Madrid se décider à un parti aussi extrême, contre la navigation et le commerce de toutes les nations neutres, tandis que l'usage reçu et respecté au plus fort de la guerre même, restreint un tel droit à des intérêts

teresses et villes ennemies bloquées et assiégées, cas où se trouve incontestablement la seule forteresse de Gibraltar. On peut se rapporter à l'égard de ces principes à ceux qu'avoit établis le Gouvernement Espagnol, lorsque sa guerre fut déclarée contre la Grande Bretagne, et qui ne portoient rien moins qu'une liberté et incolumité entiere du commerce de toutes les nations neutres. Dans la lettre même que M. le Comte de Florida Blanca avoit adressée le 10 Juillet 1779, par ordre de sa Majesté Catholique, à tous les ministres étrangers residans à Madrid, cette Cour-ci se reserve la seule faculté d'examiner les vaisseaux soupçonnés de suivre la route de Gibraltar, et declare vouloir detenir uniquement ceux qui y dirigeront leur route contre l'objet du blocus. Aucune puissance n'est sans doute en droit de demander à cet egard à la cour de Madrid, des complaisances où exceptions incompatibles avec le droit des gens, et les loix reçues parmi les nations; mais il n'est pas moins constant, que d'un autre côté, l'équité et la justice sollicitent la satisfaction due aux sujets de

S. M. I.

S. M. I. de toutes les Russies que par son ordre exprès son Ministère est chargé de reclamer : elle se réduit principalement à ce qui suit.

1^{mo}, QUE tous bâtimens neutres, qui se trouvent chargés en entier ou en partie de propriétés Russes, amenés de force et détenus contre leur gré, soit à Cadix, soit dans d'autres ports d'Espagne, soient incessamment relâchés pour continuer leur route vers l'endroit de leur destination, à l'exception des places bloquées, comme est la forteresse de Gibraltar.

2^{do}, QUE toute perte et dommages causés par des detentions violentes, saisies, ventes forcées, et par les différences des prix qui en sont la suite, ou par telle autre démarche arbitraire dont viennent à souffrir les sujets Russes ; et nomément, dans le cas présent, la maison de R. van Brienon, Fils, et Compagnie, soient compensés, et qu'il soit pourvu à leur dédommagement prompt et plenier : Et, enfin,

3^{tie}, Que les ordres d'amener tous les vaisseaux

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neutres,

neutres, fans distinction à Cadix, où ailleurs, soient incessamment levés.

Il n'est pas neceffaire d'étaler ici des raisons qui doivent porter Sa Majesté Catholique à redresser les griefs de tant de nations. La bonne foi, qui fait la base de tout commerce, la fureté sans laquelle il n'en existe pas du tout, et le préjudice qui resulteroit de son interruption, en sont de trop graves pour qu'elles puissent échapper à un Prince, juste et equitable, et aux lumieres de son ministère. Il est des considerations qui ont un rapport particulier à la Russie et à l'Espagne, dont le commerce direct vient seulement à s'établir à l'avantage mutuel des deux nations, et qu'il seroit bien affligeant de voir étouffer, lorsqu' à peine il avoit pris quelque consistance.

Il a été formé par tout des plaintes contre la Grande Bretagne, et les Cours de Madrid et de Versailles en ont fait souvent que cette puissance-là troubloit la liberté du commerce ; cependant la Cour de Londres a toujours pris
fortement

fortement à coeur de contenter les negociants neutres dont les charges ont été faïties, conformément à leurs propres factures, et en y ajoutant même un profit raisonnable. Si cette maniere d'agir s'est attiré de justes reproches, combien plus etranges ne doivent pas paroître aux yeux de toutes les nations, les principes actuellement adoptés en Espagne ?

Sa Majesté Impériale a donné trop de preuves de sa bonne foi, de sa candeur, et de son impartialité, pour qu'elle ne puisse se promettre avec une entière confiance de retrouver ces sentimens dans sa Majesté Catholique, et attendre de son amitié, et de son equité, la juste satisfaction due à ses sujets, dont elle affectionne particulièrement l'interêt et les avantages.

A St Peterbourg, le 24 Janvier 1780.

(B)

*Note pour Mons. de Normandes, Chargé des Affaires de
S. Majesté Catholique.*

IL est connu à la Cour de Madrid, par la note récemment remise, avec combien peu de ménagement il a été disposé à Cadix de la propriété d'un sujet Russe chargée dans un vaisseau Hollandois, Concordia, Capitaine Hans Jansen, allant d'Archangel à Barcelone. Si cette démarche, entierement contraire au droit general des gens, et aux usages reçus entre les nations commerçantes et amies, n'a pu qu'exciter la sensibilité de l'Imperatrice, elle a du particulièrement être affectée par le compte que vient de rendre le consul de Russie à Cadix du procédé qu'on s'est permis contre le vaisseau marchand Russe le St Nicolas, Capitaine Jean Landschoff, appartenant au negociant de Petersbourg, Jaques Chadimiroffky. Ce bâtiment, chargé pour le compte du dit negociant de 942 sacs de bled, pour Malaga et Livourne,

Livourne, dont le retour devoit confister dans un chargement de vins d'Espagne, a été pris et conduit à Cadix par le Sieur Arthuro Moreno, où l'on a enlevé tous les documents, du Capitaine, et sans avertir le consul de Russie y établi, ni prévenir le capitaine de produire sa justification, ont été vendus ; on n'a pas même cité dans l'affiche de la vente le pavillon, comme c'est d'usage à l'égard des autres nations. Moins que la Cour Imperiale de Russie pourroit s'attendre à un défaut si manqué d'égards pour sa neutralité, et pour la liberté du commerce de ses sujets, plus elle se voit fondée à porter ses justes plaintes à la Cour de Madrid ; sur tout ce qu'il y a d'irregulier et d'arbitraire dans la conduite de ses officiers. Le Ministère de Russie, muni d'ordres exprés et positifs de sa Majesté Imperiale, s'empresse d'inviter Monsieur le Chargé d'Affaires de porter ces plaintes à la connoissance de sa Cour, et y joint la requisition formelle, d'une restitution entiere de la valeur des propriétés appartenantes aux sujets de sa Majesté Imperiale, et d'un dedomagement des pertes auxquelles ils ont été exposés, ou qu'ils pourroient effuyer dans
la

la suite. Il remplit encore les intentions de sa Souveraine, en requérant qu'il soit permis à tout vaisseau Russe, detenu d'une maniere aussi illegale de poursuivre incessamment sa route, pour se rendre à sa destination, et qu'il soit inhibition expresse faite à tout vaisseau de guerre, ou armateur Espagnol, de troubler la navigation et le commerce de Russie, ou de manquer aux egards dus à son pavillon et à sa neutralité.

L'IMPERATRICE a une trop grande opinion de la façon de penser de sa Majesté Catholique, et de son sentiment sur ce que se doivent reciproquement les souverains, ce qu' exige leur dignité, le bien être de leurs sujêts, et les obligations qui en resultent, pour qu'elle ne se persuade que ces griefs ne manqueront pas d'être redressés dès aussitot qu'ils auront été mis sous les yeux du Roi ; et qu'une satisfaction prompte et eclatante levera tout sujet de plainte, en retablissant la confiance et la sûreté dont dependent la vigueur et l'activité de tout commerce parmi les nations.

Premiere

(C)

Premiere Declaration de l'Imperatrice de Russie aux Puissances Belligerantes, pour établir les Principes des Neutres pour la Liberté des Commerce. Fevr. 1780.

L'IMPERATRICE de toutes les Russies a si bien manifesté ses sentimens de justice, d'équité, et de moderation, qui l'animent, et a donné des preuves si evidentes, pendant le cours de la guerre qu'elle avoit à soutenir contre la Porte Ottomane, des égards qu'elle a pour les droits de la neutralité et de la liberté du commerce general, qu'elle peut s'en rapporter aux temoignages de toute l'Europe.

CETTE conduite, ainsi que les principes d'impartialité qu'elle a deployés pendant la guerre actuelle, ont du lui inspirer la juste confiance, que ses sujets jouiroient paisiblement des fruits de leur industrie, et des avantages appartenants à toute nation neutre.— L'experience a cependant prouvé le contraire.

Ni

Ni ces confiderations là, ni les égards dus à ce que prefcrit le droit des gens univerfel, n'ont pu empêcher que les fujets de S. M. I. n'aient été fouvent moleftés dans leur navigation, et arrêtés dans leurs operations par celles des puiffances belligerantes.

Ces entraves mifes à la liberté du commerce general, et de celui de Ruffie en particulier, font de nature à exciter l'attention des Souverains et de toutes les nations neutres ; l'Imperatrice voit refulter pour elle l'obligation de s'en affranchir par tous les moyens compatibles avec fa dignité, et avec le bien de fes fujets ; mais avant d'en venir à l'effet, et dans l'intention fincere de prévenir de nouvelles atteintes, elle a cru être de fa juftice d'expofer aux yeux de l'Europe les principes qu'elle va fuivre, et qui font propres à lever tout mal-entendu, et ce qui pourroit y donner lieu. Elle le fait avec d'autant plus de confiance, qu'elle trouve confignées ces principes dans le droit primitif des peuples, que toute nation eft fondée à reclamer, et que les puiffances belligerantes ne fauroient les invalider fans

ſans violer les loix de la neutralité, et ſans deſ-
avouer les maximes qu'elles ont adoptées no-
mément dans différens traités et engagements
publics.

Ils ſe reduiſent aux points qui ſuivent.

1^{mo}, QUE les vaiſſeaux neutres puiſſent na-
vigner librement de port en port, et ſur les
côtes des nations en guerre.

2^{do}, QUE les effets appartenants aux ſujets
des dites puiffances en guerre ſoient libres ſur
des vaiſſeaux neutres, à l'exception des mar-
chandises de contrebande.

3^{io}, QUE l'Imperatrice ſe tient, quant à la
fixation de celles-ci à ce qui eſt énoncé dans les
articles X. et XI. de ſon traité de commerce
avec le Grande Bretagne, en étendant ces ob-
ligations à toutes les puiffances en guerre.

4^{to}, QUE pour déterminer ce qui caractérife
un *port bloqué*, on n'accorde cette denomina-
tion qu' à celui où il y a par la diſpoſition de

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la puissance qui l'attaque avec des vaisseaux armés et suffisamment proches, un danger évident d'y entrer.

5^{to}, QUE ces principes servent de regles dans les procédures et les jugemens sur la legalité des prises. Sa Majesté Imperiale en les manifestant, ne balance point de declarer, que, pour les maintenir, et afin de proteger l'honneur de son pavillon, la sureté du commerce, et de la navigation de ses sujets contre qui que ce soit, elle fait appareiller une partie considerable de ses forces maritimes. Cette mesure n'influera cependant d'aucune maniere sur la stricte et rigoureuse neutralité qu'elle a faintement observée, et qu'elle observera tant qu'elle ne sera provoquée et forcée de sortir des bornes de moderation et d'impartialité parfaites ; ce n'est que dans cette extremité que sa flotte aura ordre de se porter par tout où l'honneur, l'interêt, et le besoin l'appelleront.

EN donnant cette assurance formelle, avec la franchise propre à son caractère, l'Impératrice ne peut que se promettre que les puissances

fances belligerantes, pénétrées des sentimens de justice et d'équité dont elle est animée, contribueront à l'accomplissement de ses vues salutaires, qui tendent si manifestement à l'utilité de toutes les nations, et à l'avantage même de celles en guerre ; qu'en conséquence elles muniront leurs amirautés, et officiers commandants, d'instructions analogues et conformes aux principes ci-dessus énoncés, puisés dans le code primitif des peuples, et adoptés si souvent dans leurs conventions.

(D)

Convention Maritime pour le Maintien de la Liberté de la Navigation Neutre, conclue entre Sa Majesté Imperiale, et Sa Majesté le Roi de Dannemarc et de Norvege, à Copenhague ce 28 Juin-9 Juillet, 1780.

LA presente guerre maritime, allumée entre la Grande Bretagne d'un côté, et la France et l'Espagne de l'autre, ayant porté un prejudice notable au commerce et à la navigation des nations neutres, sa Majesté l'Imperatrice de toutes les Russies, et sa Majesté le Roi de Dannemarc et de Norvege, toujours attentives à concilier leur dignité, et leurs soins pour la sureté et le bonheur de leurs sujets, avec les égards qu'elles ont si souvent manifestés pour les droits des peuples en general, ont reconnu la necessité où elles se trouvent de regler, dans les circonstances presentes, leur conduite d'après ces sentimens.

SA Majesté Imperiale de toutes les Russies
a avoué à la face de l'Europe, au moyen de sa
declaration

declaration, en date du 28 Fevrier 1780, remise aux puissances actuellement en guerre, les principes puisés dans le droit primitif des nations, qu'elle reclame, et qu'elle a adoptés pour règle de sa conduite pendant la guerre actuelle. Cette attention de l'Imperatrice à veiller au maintien des droits communs des peuples, ayant été applaudie par toutes les nations neutres, les a réunies dans une cause qui regarde la defense de leurs interêts les plus chers, et les a portées à s'occuper serieusement d'un objet precieux pour les tems presens et avenir, en tant qu'il importe de former et de réunir en un corps de systême permanent et immuable, les droits, prerogatives, bornes, et obligations de la neutralité. Sa Majesté le Roi de Dannemarc et de Norvege, penetrée de ces mêmes principes, les a egaleement établis et reclamés, dans sa declaraton qu'il a fait remettre le 8 Juillet 1780, aux trois puissances belligerantes, en conformité de celle de la Russie ; et pour le soutien desquels, sa Majesté Danoise a même fait armer une partie considerable de sa flotte ; de là est resulté l'accord
et

et l'unanimité avec lesquels sa Majesté l'Impératrice de toutes les Russies, et sa Majesté le Roi de Dannemarc et de Norvege, en conséquence de leur amitié et de leur confiance reciproque, ainsi que de la conformité des intérêts de leurs sujets, ont jugé à propos de donner au moyen d'une convention formelle, une sanction solennelle, aux engagements mutuels à prendre. Pour cet effet, leurs dites Majestés ont choisi et nommé pour leur plenipotentiaires, savoir : Sa Majesté Imperiale de toutes les Russies, le Sieur Charles d'Osten, nommé Sacken, Conseiller d'Etat actuel, Chevalier de l'ordre de S. Anne ; Envoyé Extraordinaire et Ministre Plenipotentiaire de sa dite Majesté près de la Cour de Dannemarc, &c. : et sa Majesté le Roi de Dannemarc et de Norvege, le Sieur Otto Comte de Thott, Conseiller privé de son Conseil, Chevalier de l'ordre de l'Elephant, &c. ; le Sieur Joachim Otto de Schack-Rathlou, Conseiller privé de son Conseil, Chevalier de l'ordre de l'Elephant, &c. ; le Sieur Jean Henri d'Eickstedt, Conseiller privé de son Conseil, Gouverneur de S. A. Rle. le Prince

Prince Royal, Chevalier de l'ordre de l'Elephant, &c. ; et le Sieur André Pierre Comte de Bernstorff, Conseiller privé de son Conseil, Secrétaire d'Etat pour le département d'affaires étrangères, Directeur de la Chancellerie Allemande, Chevalier de l'ordre de l'Elephant, &c. ; lesquels après avoir échangé entre eux leurs plein-pouvoirs, trouvés en bonne et due forme, ont arrêté et conclu les articles suivants :

ARTICLE I.

LEURS dites Majestés étant sincèrement résolues d'entretenir constamment l'amitié et l'harmonie la plus parfaite avec les puissances actuellement en guerre, et de continuer à observer la neutralité la plus stricte et la plus exacte déclarent vouloir tenir la main à la plus rigoureuse exécution des défenses portées contre le commerce de contrebande de leurs sujets avec qui ce soit des puissances déjà en guerre, ou qui pourroient y entrer dans la suite.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE II.

POUR éviter toute equivoque et tout mal-entendu sur ce qui doit être qualifié de contrabande sa Majesté Imperiale de toutes les Russies et sa Majesté le Roi de Dannemarc et de Norvege declarent, qu'elles ne reconnoissent pour telles que les marchandises comprises sous cette denomination dans les traités qui subsistent entre leurs dites Majestés et l'une ou l'autre des puissances belligerantes, sa Majesté Imperiale de toutes les Russies se referant nommément, à cet égard, aux articles X et XI de son traité de commerce avec la Grande Bretagne ; elle en étend les obligations entièrement fondées dans le droit naturel, aux Couronnes de France et d'Espagne, qui n'ont point été liées jusqu' ici avec son Empire par aucun engagement formel purement relatif au commerce. Sa Majesté le Roi de Dannemarc et de Norvege, de son côté, se rapporte aussi nommément à l'article III. de son traité de commerce avec la Grande Bretagne, et aux articles

articles XXVI et XXVII de son traité de commerce avec la France, et étend les obligations de celui-ci à l'Espagne, n'ayant point avec cette Couronne des engagements qui décident.

ARTICLE III.

LA contrebande déterminée et exclue du commerce des nations neutres, en conformité des traités et stipulations expresse subsistantes entre les hautes parties contractantes et les puissances en guerre, et nommément en vertu du traité de commerce conclu entre la Russie et la Grande Bretagne, le 20 Juin 1766; ainsi que du traité de commerce conclu entre le Dannemarc et la Grande Bretagne le 11 Juillet 1670, et de celui conclu entre le Danne-marc et la France le 23 d'Août 1742. Sa Majesté Imperiale de toutes les Russies, et sa Majesté le Roi de Dannemarc et de Norvege, entendent et veulent que tout autre traffique soit et reste parfaitement libre. Leurs Majestés, après avoir déjà réclamé dans leurs déclara-

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rations,

rations, faites aux puissances belligerantes, les principes generaux du droit naturel, dont la liberté du commerce et de la navigation, de même que les droits des peuples neutres, sont une consequence directe, ont resolu de ne les point laisser plus long tems dependre d'une interpretation arbitraire, suggerée par des interêts isolés et momentanés. Dans cette vue elles sont convenues :

1mo, QUE tout vaisseau peut naviguer librement de port en port, et sur les côtes des nations en guerre.

2do, QUE les effets appartenants aux sujets des dites puissances en guerre, soyent libres sur des vaisseaux neutres, à l'exception des marchandises de contrabande.

3tio, QUE, pour determiner ce qui caracterise un port bloqué, on n'accorde cette denomination qu' à celui où il y a par la disposition de la puissance qui l'attaque avec des vaisseaux arrêtés et suffisamment proches, un danger evident d'entrer.

4to,

4^{to}. QUE les vaisseaux neutres ne peuvent être arrêtés que sur de justes causes et faites évidentes ; qu'ils soyent jugés sans retard, que la procédure soit toujours uniforme, prompte et légale, et que chaque fois, outre les dedomagemens qu'on accorde à ceux qui ont fait des pertes, sans avoir été en faute, il soit rendu une satisfaction complete pour l'insulte faite aux pavillons de leurs Majestés.

ARTICLE IV.

POUR proteger le commerce commun de leurs sujets, fondé sur les principes ci-dessus établis, sa Majesté Imperiale de toutes les Russies, et sa Majesté le Roi de Dannemarc et de Norvege, ont jugé à propos d'equipper séparément un nombre de vaisseaux de guerre, et de fregattes proportionné à ce but, les escadres de chaque puissance ayant à prendre la station, et devant être employées aux convois qu' exigent son commerce et sa navigation, conformément à la nature et la qualité du trafic de chaque nation.

ARTICLE V.

Si pourtant il arrivoit que les vaisseaux marchands de l'une des puissances se trouvaient dans un parage, où les vaisseaux de guerre de la même nation ne fussent pas stationnés, et où ils ne pourroient pas avoir recours à leurs propres convois, alors le commandant des vaisseaux de guerre de l'autre puissance, s'il en est requis, doit de bonne foi et sincèrement leur prêter les secours dont ils pourront avoir besoin ; et en tel cas les vaisseaux de guerre, et fregattes de l'une des puissances, serviront de soutien et d'appui aux vaisseaux marchands de l'autre, bien entendu cependant que les reclamants n'auroient fait aucun commerce illicite, ni contraire aux principes de la neutralité.

ARTICLE VI.

CETTE convention n'aura point d'effet rétroactif, et par conséquent on ne prendra aucune

cune part aux differends nés avant sa conclusion, à moins qu'il ne soit question d'actes de violences continués, tendants à fonder un système oppressif pour toutes les nations neutres de l'Europe en general,

ARTICLE VII.

S'IL arrivoit, malgré tous les soins les plus attentifs et les plus amicaux employés par les deux puissances, et malgré l'observation de la neutralité la plus parfaite de leur part, que les vaisseaux marchands de Sa Majesté Impériale de toutes les Russies, et de Sa Majesté le Roi de Dannemarc et de Norvege, fussent insultés, pillés, ou pris par les vaisseaux de guerre, ou armateurs de l'une ou de l'autre puissance en guerre, alors le ministre de la partie lésée auprès de la Cour dont les vaisseaux de guerre, ou armateurs auront commis de tels attentats, y fera des représentations, reclamera le vaisseau marchand enlevé, et insistera sur des dedomagemens convenables, en ne perdant jamais de vue la réparation de l'insulte

sulte faite au pavillon. Le ministre de l'autre partie contractante se joindra à lui, et appuyera ses plaintes de la maniere la plus énergique, et la plus efficace ; et ainsi il sera agi d'un commun et parfait accord ; que si l'on refusoit de rendre justice sur ces plaintes, ou si l'on remettoit, de la rendre d'un tems à l'autre, alors leurs Majestés useront de représailles contre la puissance qui la leur refuseroit, et elles se concerteront incessamment sur la maniere la plus efficace d'effectuer ces justes représailles.

ARTICLE VIII.

S'IL arrivoit que l'une ou l'autre des deux puissances, ou toutes les deux ensemble, à l'occasion, ou en haine de la presente convention, ou pour quelque cause qui y eut rapport, fut inquiétée, molestée, ou attaquée, il a été également convenu, que les deux puissances feront cause commune pour se defendre reciproquement, et pour travailler et agir de concert à se procurer une pleine et entiere satisfaction, tant pour l'insulte faite à leur pavillon, que pour les pertes causées à leurs sujets.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE IX.

CETTE convention, arrêtée et conclue pour tout le tems que durera la guerre actuelle, servira de base aux engagements que les conjonctures pourroient faire contracter dans la suite des tems, et à l'occasion des nouvelles guerres maritimes par lesquelles l'Europe auroit le malheur d'être troublée. Ces stipulations doivent au reste être regardées comme permanentes, et feront loi en matiere de commerce et de navigation, et toutes les fois qu'il s'agira d'apprécier les droits des nations neutres.

ARTICLE X.

LE but et l'objet principal de cette convention étant d'assurer la liberté generale du commerce et de la navigation, sa Majesté Imperiale de toutes les Russies, et sa Majesté le Roi de Dannemarc et de Norvege, conviennent et s'engagent d'avance à consentir que d'autres puissances également neutres y accèdent, et qu'en,

adoptant

adoptant les principes, elles en partagent les obligations ainsi que les avantages.

ARTICLE XI.

AFIN que les puissances en guerre ne prétendent cause d'ignorance relativement aux arrangemens pris entre leurs dites Majestés, les deux hautes parties contractantes communiqueront amicalement à toutes les puissances belligerentes les mesures qu'elles ont concertées entre elles, d'autant moins hostiles qu'elles ne font au detriment d'aucune autre, mais tendent uniquement à la sûreté du commerce et de la navigation de leurs sujets respectifs.

ARTICLE XII.

LA presente convention sera ratifiée par les deux parties contractantes, et les ratifications échangées en bonne et due forme, dans l'espace de six semaines, à compter du jour de la date de la signature, ou plutôt si faire se peut.

En

En foi de quoi, nous, soufignés, en vertu de nos plein-pouvoirs, l'avons-signé et y avons apposé les cachets de nos armes.

Fait à Copenhague le 9 jour du mois de Juillet, l'an de grace 1780.

Charles d'Osten,
nommé *Sacken.*
(L. S.)

O. Thott.
(L. S.)

J. Schack Rathlou.
(L. S.)

H. Eickstedt.
(L. S.)

A. P. Cte. Bernstorff.
(L. S.)

Les ratifications de cette convention ont été échangées à Copenhague le 5-10th Septembre 1786, par les mêmes Ministres Plenipotentiaires qui l'avoient signée.

Et comme ici, à St Peterbourg, il a été signé de même le 21 Juillet dernier, par les Ministres autorisés à cet effet, savoir: De la part de sa Majesté Imperiale, par le Sieur Ni-

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kita Comte de Panin, son Conseiller privé actuel, Sénateur, Chambellan actuel, et Chevalier des ordres de S. André, de St Alexandre Newsky, et de celui de S. Anne, et par le Sieur Jean Comte d'Osterman son Vice chancelier, Conseiller privé, et Chevalier de l'ordre de S. Alexandre Newsky, et de celui de S. Anne ; et de la part de sa Majesté le Roi de Suede, par le Sieur Frederic Baron de Nolken, son Envoyé Extraordinaire à la Cour de sa Majesté Imperiale, Chambellan et Commandeur de l'ordre de l'Etoile Polaire, Chevalier de ceux de l'Epée et de St Jean, et actuellement déjà ratifié une autre convention dans la même forme, et de la même teneur, mot pour mot, que celle de Copenhague, à l'article 2. près, ou, à l'occasion d'une explication pareille de la nature de la contrabande en general, il a été nécessaire de se rapporter aux traités qui subsistent entre la Couronne de Suede et les autres puissances ; par cette raison, et pour ne point repeter ce qui a été déjà dit, on s'est contenté d'inserer ici, mot à mot, l'article 2. Il est encore à observer, que les deux Rois, en s'unissant à l'Imperatrice

trice, ont accédé reciproquement, par des actes signés par eux mêmes comme parties principales contractantes aux conventions sus mentionnées conclues entre sa Majesté Imperiale et leurs dites Majestés, lesquels actes ont été échangés ici par le Ministère de sa Majesté.

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De la Convention de St Petersbourg, conclue entre sa Majesté Imperiale, et sa Majesté le Roi de Suede, signée le 21 Juillet 1780.

ARTICLE II.

POUR eviter toute equivoque, et tout mal-entendu sur ce qui doit être qualifié de contrebande, sa Majesté Imperiale de toutes les Russies, et sa Majesté le Roi de Suede, déclarent qu'elles ne reconnoissent pour telles que les marchandises comprises sous cette denomination dans les traités qui subsistent entre leurs dites Majestés, et l'une et l'autre des puissances belligerantes. Sa Majesté Imperiale de toutes les Russies se referant nommément à cet egard aux articles X. et XI. de son traité de commerce avec la Grande Bretagne ; elle en étend les obligations, entierement fondées dans le droit naturel, aux Couronnes de France et d'Espagne, qui n'ont point été liées jusqu'ici avec son Empire par aucun engagement formel purement relatif au commerce. Sa Majesté le Roi de Suede, de son côté, se rapporte

porte aussi nommément à l'article XI. de son traité de commerce avec la Grande Bretagne, et à la teneur du traité preliminaire de commerce conclu entre les deux Couronnes de Suede et de France en 1741 ; et quoique dans ce dernier la diffinition de la contrebande ne se trouve nommément expliquée, cependant, comme les deux Royaumes y ont stipulé de se regarder reciproquement comme *gens amicissima* ; et qu' au reste, la Suede s'y est reservée les mêmes avantages dont jouissent en France d'ancien droit les villes anseatiques, avantages solennellement confirmés par les traités d'Utrecht, le Roi n'a rien à y ajouter. Vis-à-vis de l'Espagne, le Roi se trouve dans le même cas que l'Imperatrice, et à son instar il étend à la dite Couronne les obligations des surdits traités, entierement fondées dans le droit naturel.

Copie

(E)

Copie de la Declaration par laquelle sa Majesté le Roi de Suede accede à la Convention conclue entre sa Majesté l'Imperatrice de toutes les Russies et sa Majesté le Roi de Dannemarc, et signée a Copenhague le 9 Juillet, N. S. 1780.

GUSTAVE, par la grace de Dieu, Roi de Suede, des Goths et des Vandales, &c. &c. &c. Heretier de Norvege, Duc de Sleswic-Holstein, de la Stormarie et du Ditmarsen, Comte d'Oldenburg et de Delmenhorst, &c. &c. faisons savoir, qu'ayant été invité d'accéder, comme partie principale contractante, à la convention conclue et ratifiée, le 9 Juillet de l'année presente, à Copenhague, entre sa Majesté l'Imperatrice de toutes les Russies et sa Majesté le Roi de Dannemarc, parfaitement semblable à la convention conclue entre sa dite Majesté Imperiale, signée à St Petersbourg le 21 Juillet-1 d'Aout, de l'année presente, et ratifiée par nous le 9 Septembre suivant, nous certifions formellement, par cette presente declaration,

claration, comme quoi ayant également à coeur le maintien de la liberté generale du commerce et de la navigation neutre, et étant animés à cet egard des mêmes sentimens que leurs dites Majestés, nous accedons dans la meilleure forme, comme partie principale contractante, à la sus dite convention; et nous nous engageons, pour nous et pour nos successeurs, à toutes les stipulations contenues dans les clauses et articles séparés qui s'y trouvent joints, et auxquels nous accedons également dans toute leur forme et teneur. Nous nous attendons que sa Majesté Imperiale de toutes les Russies, et sa Majesté le Roi de Dannemarc, declareront également, par un acte formel, d'avoir reçu et accepté cette nôtre declaration, et nous reconnoissons comme partie principale contractante relativement à la dite convention; et comme sa Majesté le Roi de Dannemarc, après avoir été également invité, a aussi accédé de la même maniere, et dans le meme sens, à la convention, exactement semblable conclue entre nous et sa Majesté l'Imperatrice de toutes les Russies, et signée à St Peterbourg le 21 Juillet-1 d'Aout, de
l'année

l'aunée presente, nous declarons solemnellement, que nous acceptons son accession, et que nous reconnoissons sa Majesté Danoise comme partie principale contractante de cette convention, et de six articles séparés qui y sont joints. C'est en foi de quoi que nous avons signé ce present acte d'accession de notre propre main et que nous l'avons fait munir de notre sceau Royal.

Fait et donné à Spa le 9 Septembre 1780.

(Signé) GUSTAVE.

U. G. Franc.

(F)

Copie de la Declaration par laquelle sa Majesté Danoise accède à la Convention, conclue entre sa Majesté l'Imperatrice de toutes les Russies et sa Majesté le Roi de Suede, et signée à St Peterbourg le 21 Juillet-1 d'Aout, 1780.

CHRISTIAN Sept, par la grace de Dieu, Roi de Dannemarc, de Norvege, des Vandales et des Goths, Duc de Sleswic-Holstein, Stormarn, des Dithmarshes et d'Oldenburg, &c. &c. faisons sçavoir, Qu'ayant été invité d'accéder comme partie principale contractante à la convention conclue et ratifiée le 21 Juillet-1 d'Aout, 1780, à St Peterbourg, entre sa Majesté l'Imperatrice de toutes les Russies, et sa Majesté le Roi de Suede, parfaitement semblable à la convention conclue entre nous et sa dite Majesté Imperiale, et signée à Copenhague le 9 Juillet 1780. Nous certifions formellement, par cette declaration, comme quoi ayant également à cœur le maintien de la liberté generale du commerce et de la navigation neutre,

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l'aunée presente, nous declarons solemnellement, que nous acceptons son accession, et que nous reconnoissons sa Majesté Danoise comme partie principale contractante de cette convention, et de six articles separés qui y sont joints. C'est en foi de quoi que nous avons signé ce present acte d'accession de notre propre main et que nous l'avons fait munir de notre sceau Royal.

Fait et donné à Spa le 9 Septembre 1780.

(Signé) GUSTAVE.

H. G. Franc.

(F)

Copie de la Declaration par laquelle sa Majesté Danoise accede à la Convention, conclue enre sa Majesté l'Imperatrice de toutes les Russies et sa Majesté le Roi de Suede, et signée à St Petersbourg le 21 Juillet-1 d'Aout, 1780.

CHRISTIAN Sept, par la grace de Dieu, Roi de Dannemarc, de Norvege, des Vandales et des Goths, Duc de Sleswic-Holstein, Stormarn, des Dithmarses et d'Oldenburg, &c. &c. faisons sçavoir, Qu'ayant été invité d'accéder comme partie principale contractante à la convention conclue et ratifiée le 21 Juillet-1 d'Aout, 1780, à St Petersbourg, entre sa Majesté l'Imperatrice de toutes les Russies, et sa Majesté le Roi de Suede, parfaitement semblable à la convention conclue entre nous et sa dite Majesté Imperiale, et signée à Copenhague le 9 Juillet 1780. Nous certifions formellement, par cette declaration, comme quoi ayant également à coeur le maintien de la liberté generale du commerce et de la navigation neutre,

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et

et étant animés à cet egard des mêmes sentimens que leurs dites Majestés, nous accedons dans la meilleure forme, comme partie contractante à la susdite convention, et nous nous engageons pour nous, et nos successeurs, à toutes ces stipulations contenues dans ses clauses et articles, ainsi que dans les six articles séparés, qui s'y trouvent joints et auxquels nous accedons également dans toute leur forme et teneur. Nous nous attendons, que sa Majesté Imperiale de toutes les Russies, et sa Majesté le Roi de Suede, declareront également, par un acte formel, d'avoir reçu et accepté cette notre declaration, et nous reconnoissons comme partie parincipale contractante relativement à la dite convention; et comme sa Majesté le Roi de Suede, après avoir été également invité, a aussi accédé de la même maniere, et dans le même sens, à la convention exactement semblable conclue entre nous et sa Majesté l'Imperatrice de toutes les Russies, et signée à Copenhague le 9 Juillet 1780. Nous declaronz solennellement que nous acceptons son accession, et que nous reconnoissons sa Majesté Suedoise comme partie principale

pale contractante de cette convention, et de
fix articles séparés qui y sont joints. C'est en
foi de quoi que nous avons signé ce présent
acte d'accession et d'acceptation de notre pro-
pre main, et que nous l'avons fait munir de
grand sceau de notre Couronne.

Fait et donné à notre Chateau de Fre-
denbourg le 7 jour du mois de Juillet,
l'an de grace mil sept cent quatre
vingt, et de notre royaume le quinzi-
eme.

CHRISTIAN Rex.

A. V. Bernstorff.

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Copie.

(G)

*Copie du Projet de la Declaration du Roi pour être remise
aux Puissances Belligerantes, approuvé et expédié par
sa Majesté le Roi de Suede aux Cours de Versailles,
Londres, et de Madrid, d'Aix la Chapelle le 21 Ju-
illet 1780.*

DEPUIS le commencement de la presente guerre, le Roi a eu soin de faire connoître sa façon de penser à toute l'Europe : Il s'est imposé la loi d'une parfaite neutralité.

IL en a rempli les devoirs avec une exactitude scrupuleuse et il a cru pouvoir jouir, en conséquence des droits attachés à la qualité d'un Souverain absolument neutre ; malgré cela ses sujets commerçans ont été obligés de réclamer sa protection, et sa Majesté s'est trouvée dans la nécessité de la leur accorder. Pour remplir cet objet, le Roi fit armer un certain nombre de vaisseaux de guerre dès l'année passée. Il en employe une partie sur les côtes de son royaume, et l'autre à servir à convoi des batimens marchands Suedois dans les différentes

ferentes mers, où le commerce de ses sujets les faisoit naviguer. Il fit part de ses mesures aux puissances belligerantes, et il se preparoit à les continuer dans le courant de cette année, lorsque d'autres Cours, qui avoient également adopté la neutralité, lui firent part des dispositions où elles se trouvoient, conformes à celle du Roi, et tendantes au même but.

L'IMPERATRICE de Russie fit remettre une declaration aux Cours de Londres, de Versailles, et de Madrid, par laquelle elle les instruisit de la resolution où elle étoit de défendre le commerce de ses sujets, et le droit universel de nations neutres. Cette declaration portoit sur des principes si justes du droit des gens, et des traités subsistants, qu'il ne parut pas possible de les revoquer en doute. Le Roi les a trouvés entierement d'accords avec sa propre cause, avec les traités conclus en 1660 entre la Suede et l'Angleterre, et celui de la France et de la Suede en 1741, et sa Majesté n'a pu se refuser de reconnoître et d'adopter ces mêmes principes, non seulement par rapport aux puissances avec lesquelles les dits traités

tés sont en vigueur, mais aussi par rapport à celles qui se trouvent déjà impliquées dans la présente guerre, ou qui pourront le devenir par la suite, et avec lesquelles le Roi est dans le cas de n'avoir point de traité à réclamer. C'est la loi universelle, et au défaut des engagements particuliers, celle-là devient obligatoire pour toutes les nations.

EN conséquence le Roi déclare actuellement de nouveau, qu'il observera à l'avenir la même neutralité, et avec la même exactitude qu'il a fait par le passé. Il défendra à ses sujets, par des graves peines, de s'écarter en manière quelconque des devoirs que leur inspire une pareille neutralité ; mais il protégera leur commerce légitime par tous les moyens possibles, lorsqu'ils le feront conformément aux principes ci-dessus mentionnés.

Memoire

(H)

Memoire de la Cour de Suede pour celle de la Russie.

LORSQUE la Republique des Provinces Unies des Pais Bas resolut de prendre part à la neutralité, armée par son accession aux conventions maritimes des puissances du Nord, elle jouissoit elle même d'une parfaite neutralité, et rien ne s'opposoit à l'accomplissement d'un ouvrage qui fut porté à sa perfection par un acte d'accession et d'acceptation, signé à St Petersburg le 24 Decembre passé, V. St.

PAR cette occasion, la Republique s'engagea dans la cause commune des puissances neutres, et acquit comme telle des droits aux secours des autres puissances avec lesquelles elle devoit partager les obligations et les avantages, conformément à la teneur des conventions faites l'année passée entre la Suede, la Russie, et le Dannemarc.

MAIS

MAIS la Republique ne put pas conserver longtems la qualité sous laquelle elle avoit contracté ses engagements. L'Angleterre lui déclara la guerre, et força la Republique de sortir de la classe des puissances neutres pour se ranger parmi les puissances belligerantes, tout cela se passa avec une rapidité si prodigieuse, que les ambassadeurs furent rapelés de part et d'autre, des lettres de marque expédiées, et plusieurs navires Hollandois pris, avant que la nouvelle de l'accession faite à St Petersburg pût arriver à la Haye.

DANS une position des choses si extraordinaire, il devient essentiel, de la part des trois Couronnes du Nord, de pèser murement la nature de leurs engagements vis-a-vis de la Republique, et de résoudre cette question avec une union et un concert des plus intimes.

LE système adopté de la part de ces puissances est un système de neutralité parfaite. Ce n'est qu'en suivant ce système qu'elles ont le droit de faire librement leur commerce, qu'elles se sont engagées à le protéger, et à se soutenir

nir mutuellement ; sous ce point de vue elles ont fixé les obligations et le secours qu'elles se doivent réciproquement, leurs armemens maritimes se font en conséquence ; ils ne tendent à l'offense de personne. Les vaisseaux de guerre d'une nation neutre, les obligations et les avantages sont les mêmes de part et d'autre ; mais il n'est pas de même de leur part vis-à-vis d'une nation en guerre. On ne sauroit concerter ses mesures, on ne sauroit agir en commun, sans sortir des bornes que prescrit une exacte neutralité, sans renverser le système sur lequel leur union et leurs engagements sont fondés,

MALGRE une difference si marquée entre la position des trois Couronnes du Nord, et celle de la Republique d'Hollande, celle-ci s'est adressée à celles-là par des memoires remis aux Cours de Stockholm, de St Petersbourg, et de Copenhague, et par lesquels les Etats Generaux des Provinces Unies reclament une assistance prompte et efficace de la part de ces trois Cours, en vertu de l'accession de la Repub-

lique aux conventions de St Peterbourg et de Copenhague, et en vertu des engagemens y contenus.

LA principale raison sur laquelle la Republique fonde sa reclamation consiste dans une combinaison des demarches dont la conduite de la Cour de Londres a été marquée ; on croit y voir clairement une resolution prise de ne point souffrir que la Republique accedât aux conventions des puissances du Nord. C'est en haine de cette accession, que la Republique a été entraînée dans la guerre ; c'est donc en consequence des articles 7, 8, et 9 des mêmes conventions, que les puissances, qui ont accepté cette accession doivent venir au secours de la Republique.

PAR la marche extraordinaire et violente qu' a tenu la Grande Bretagne envers la Republique, par le soin extrême avec lequel Lord Stormont a prevenu que la declaration des Etats Generaux ne put lui parvenir avant que la rupture fût annoncé au Comte de Weideren ;

Welderen ; par tout ce qui a précédé et suivi cet événement, on ne sauroit disconvenir du motif qui a déterminé la Cour de Londres. Mais elle n'a point allégué cette raison dans son manifeste ; elle ne parle que des faits antérieurs à la résolution même des Etats Generaux prise par rapport à l'accession ; et l'article 6 des conventions de Petersbourg et de Copenhague porte, que les obligations des parties contractantes ne sauroient s'étendre aux choses passées avant la signature des dites conventions ; c'est à dire, qu'elles ne peuvent pas avoir un effet retroactif.

IL est donc maintenant au choix des trois Couronnes du Nord, ou d'adopter le raisonnement et les conséquences mises en avant par les Etats Generaux, ou bien de s'en tenir aux motifs annoncés dans la declaration de la guerre que la Cour de Londres a fait publier. Dans le premier cas, il faut prendre part à la guerre en faveur de la Republique ; dans le second, on peut declarer, si on le juge à propos, la reclamation faite, en envisageant la

querelle de la Republique comme étrangere à la cause des neutres, comme ayant été motivée avant l'accession faite ; mais l'un et l'autre de ces partis semblent accompagnés de grands inconveniens. Dans le premier cas, il faudroit renoncer aux avantages de la neutralité, au but glorieux qu'on s'est proposé en faisant l'association maritime ; il faudroit se jeter dans toutes les horreurs, et souffrir toutes les pertes qui sont une suite naturelle de la guerre. Dans le second, on afficheroit une foiblesse frappante aux yeux de l'univers, et l'abandon total d'un etat avec lequel on craint de se lier par des engagements formels.

IL reste donc entre ces parties extrêmes un moyen mitoyen à prendre, ou pour mieux dire, il y a un expedient à saisir, et c'est par celui-là qu'il semble qu'on doit commencer. Reste après à voir jusqu' où cela peut mener, et quel en fera l'effet. Cet expedient semble consister dans une declaration que les trois Couronnes du Nord se croiroient autorisées à faire remettre à la Cour de Londres, dont les termes devoient

devoient être concertés entre elles, et par laquelle on feroit part à sa Majesté Britannique que la Republique vient d'accéder à leurs conventions maritimes ; qu'elles regardent la Republique sous cette qualité comme leur alliée, ayant la même cause à soutenir, les mêmes droits à defendre ; que les trois Couronnes du Nord ne veulent point s'eriger en juges des raisons qui ont porté sa Majesté Britannique à declarer la guerre à la Republique, mais qu'elles avouent s'interesser sincerement au bonheur et au bien être de cet Etat ; qu'en consequence de ces sentiments, les Cours alliées souhaitent que sa Majesté Britannique veuille bien ouvrir une voye de conciliation et d'accommodement entre elle et la Republique, que les trois Cours employeroient tous leurs bons offices pour pouvoir terminer a l'amicable les differens survenus ; qu'elles croiroient faire un service essentiel à l'humanité, si elles pourroient rendre cette conciliation generale ; et qu'en attendant, on souhaite que, tant de la part de l'Angleterre que de celle de la Republique, on veuille bien commencer par faire
cesser

cesser les hostilités, et remettre les choses dans l'état où elles étoient avant la rupture. / Suivant ce qu'on en conviendrait on pourra faire cette démarche soit verbalement, soit par écrit, mais séparément, par les Ministres des trois Cours résidents à Londres. Ils devroient aussi se concerter entre eux du tems où les représentations communes se feroient, afin de donner plus de poids et plus de force à leurs démarches ; et si ce langage est appuyé par les armemens maritimes, dont les Couronnes du Nord sont actuellement occupées, on doit croire que l'Angleterre y fera quelques réflexions sérieuses. Ce qu'il y a de certain, c'est que la dignité de nos Cours semble exiger, qu'elles fassent quelque chose en faveur de la République considérée comme son alliée, et ce qui n'est pas moins nécessaire, c'est, que cette démarche porte aux yeux de l'Europe, l'empreinte des motifs et de la moderation, tout comme celle de la fermeté qui a caractérisé la conduite de nos Cours jusqu' à présent.

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ON ne peut encore prévoir si le Ministère Anglois veut entrer en negociation, ou s'il fait seulement semblant de vouloir s'y prêter ; mais en tout cas on croit, que les Ministres respectifs devoient en même tems être instruits à ne se point departir de la proposition de l'armistice, et que la Republique puisse en attendant jouir de la liberté de commerce, au défaut de quoi ils peuvent repondre, qu'ils ne sont point autorisés à écouter les propositions de l'Angleterre : mais si ces conditions sont accordées, ils prendront les propositions de cette Cour *ad referendum*. On se concertera avec la Republique sur les objets de ses demandes, ou reduira le tout entre les trois Couronnes du Nord, à ce qui se trouvera juste et raisonnable ; et on tâchera, en agissant également en commun, à déterminer l'une et l'autre des puissances intéressées à accepter ces conditions.

Si, dans le courant d'une pareille negociation, on trouve moyen à lier la partie entre les autres puissances belligerantes, il faudra sans doute saisir l'occasion avec empressement, et
tâcher

tâcher de porter les choses à une pacification générale en constatant, à la paix, le code maritime general pour les neutres, adopté par nos Cours, et dont l'établissement universel remplira les vœux de tout le monde, et portera la gloire des Couronnes qui y ont concouru à son comble.

Stockholm. ce 17 Fevrier 1781.

Traduction



(I)

*Traduction du Rescript adressé à Monsieur le Comte de
Moussin Pouschkin, en date 1781.*

Vos rapports, et les communications du Baron de Nolken, Ministre de Suede, nous ont instruit, presque à la foi, tant des dispositions de la Cour de Stockholm, relativement à la guerre qui s'est allumée entre les deux puissances maritimes, que du desir de sa Majesté Suedoise de connoître nos propres sentimens à cet egard. Accoutumés à payer d'un parfait retour la confiance de nos alliés, nous nous éloignerons encore moins de cette regle dans les circonstances presentes, où la consideration de nos engagemens respectifs par rapport à la neutralité armée, doit exciter au même degré notre attention et notre intérêt. En consequence vous êtes autorisé à vous expliquer confidemment avec le Comte Scheffer, afin qu'il en fasse part à son Maître, qu'aussitôt que nous avons appris le depart brusque du

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Chevalier.

Chevalier d'York de la Haye, nous nous formâmes empressés de faire les représentations les plus fortes à la Cour de Londres, pour l'empêcher de se porter à des hostilités effectives. Nous ignorons encore qu'elles devoient suivre immédiatement le départ de son Ambassadeur; nous en étant convaincus quelques jours après, et ayant senti toute l'inutilité de toute démarche tendante à les prévenir, nous avons songé à de nouvelles mesures plus adaptées aux tems et aux circonstances, et capables d'éteindre le feu de la guerre dans sa naissance. Nous avons été animés à cela par un double motif, celui de l'humanité souffrante de l'effusion du sang innocent, et celui de l'intérêt des nations neutres par rapport à leur commerce avec les belligérantes; quoique, après la requisiion formelle faite par le Roi d'Angleterre, de notre médiation conjointement avec l'Empereur des Romains, pour sa pacification avec les Cours de France et d'Espagne, il y ait eu quelque apparence, à l'ouverture des négociations de paix; cependant comme il falloit du tems pour s'expliquer là dessus avec les deux Couronnes, et en recevoir le consentement

ment reciproque, nous avons jugé à propos de prendre une voye plus courte pour reconcilier l'Angleterre et la Hollande entre elles, en leur offrant pour cet effet notre mediation separée. Notre intention là dedans étoit d'écarter de leur racommodement particulier tout objet de discussion qui leur seroit étranger, et surtout la question de l'indépendance des Americains, qui y auroit porté la principale difficulté. Les Etats Generaux ont reçu notre offre avec reconnoissance, et empressement d'en profiter, ainsi que vous le verrez par la piece ci-jointe. L'Angleterre, au contraire, a decliné en renvoyant sa reconciliation avec la Republique à la future negociation generale de paix, sous la mediation reunie des deux Cours Imperiales. A l'époque de son existence, nous ne manquerons pas de travailler tant par nous même qu'en interessant également sa Majesté l'Empereur en faveur de la Republique d'Hollande, afin qu'elle fût comprise au moins dans la pacification generale, après en avoir donné des assurances aux Etats Generaux, nous leur avons promis en même tems de nous concerter amicalement avec nos alliés sur un nouvel ef-

fort, que nous employerons en commun et unanimement auprès de la Cour de Londres, pour la refoudre à la moderation, et à l'amour de la paix.

Nous avons d'autant moins balancé à donner ces assurances à L. L. H. H. P. P. que nous avons rencontré dans le memoire du 17 Fevr. communiqué par le B. de Nolken, et dont on joint ici une copie pour votre information, une determination decidée de la part de S. M. Suedoise à une pareille demarche. Tout le contenu dans ce memoire atteste d'un côté la profonde pénétration de ce Prince ; et de l'autre, l'accord parfait de sa façon avec la notre. *A la verité, les tems et les circonstances dans lesquelles la Grande Bretagne attaque son ancienne alliée la Republique d'Hollande, indiquent assez que la veritable cause de son agression git dans l'accession des Etats Generaux à nos conventions maritimes, d'autant plus, que par là elle mettoit parfaitement à couvert la navigation et l'industrie commerçante de ses sujets, exercée pour la plus part en faveur des ennemis de l'Angleterre.*

MAIS

MAIS d'un autre côté, il n'est pas moins vrai, que la rupture effective a précédé l'accession formelle de L. L. H. H. P. P. aux conventions de Copenhague et de Petersbourg, et que les motifs qui ont été déclarés sont antérieurs et tout à fait étrangers à la cause des alliés de la neutralité armée. Dans la première partie de ce raisonnement, les articles 7. 8. et 9. sont tout à fait favorables aux Hollandois ; mais l'article 6. nous affranchit, en termes non moins clairs, de toute participation à leur guerre avec l'Angleterre. Une différence aussi essentielle, dans les stipulations de ces conventions, laisse aux trois Cours alliées la liberté de prendre le parti le plus avantageux, et le plus analogue à leur intérêt.

RIEN n'est mieux fondé ni plus sage que l'appréciation de ce choix délicat adopté dans le memoire Suedois : on y a discuté et montré sous leur vrai point de vue les inconveniens de chaque partie, en indiquant le meilleur moyen de s'en garantir. En admettant ce moyen, qui est celui de l'observation de la neutralité
pour

pour regle de la conduite des trois Cours alliées dans la nouvelle guerre des puissances maritimes, nous n'avons pas manqué d'informer de bonne heure les Cours de Stockholm et de Copenhague, des ordres que nous avons fait expedier à nos commandeurs sur mer de regarder la Republique des Provinces Unies comme une puissance neutre à l'égard des deux branches de la Maison de Bourbon, et belligerante avec l'Angleterre. En supputant le tems, nous nous attendrons à apprendre bientôt de vous, et du Conseiller d'Etat le Sieur Sacken, que les Rois nos alliés ont aussi donné dans leurs états des ordres semblables, afin que toutes nos actions et toutes nos démarches soyent en tout et partout parfaitement uniformes, et attestent entre nous cette intime liaison, qui doit enfin legitimer dans les siècles à venir le système bienfaisant de la navigation marchande neutre.

APRES avoir assuré ce que nous devons au bien de nos Etats préféablement à tout intérêt étranger, nous ne nous éloignerons pas, comme nous l'avons dit ci-dessus. d'employer
en

en faveur de la Republique d'Hollande tous les moyens combinables avec ce premier de nos devoirs. En consequence, nous adherons volontiers à l'idée de sa Majesté Suedoise de faire au nom commun des trois Cours alliées une representation convenable à celle de Londres. *Dans le memoire Suedois il est question d'une declaration, mais celle-ci par sa nature peut nous entrainer au delà de nos intentions, au lieu qu'une simple insinuation verbale qui exprimera la même chose, et avec la même force, ne peut nous engager à rien contre gré et desir.* Cette observation, aussi simple qu'essentielle, n'échappera pas à la pénétration du Comte Scheffer, avec lequel vous avez à convenir tant sur les termes dans lesquels cette representation sera conçue, que sur le tems auquel elle sera faite à Londres, et à la maniere dont nos Ministres respectifs à cette Cour doivent s'en acquitter.

Nous n'aurions fait aucune difficulté d'adopter les propres termes proposés dans le memoire sus-mentionné, les trouvant aussi modé-

res

rés qu'analogues au but de cette demarche, si les circonstances, qui sont devenues maintenant notoires à la Cour de Stockholm, ne nous paroissent demander quelques changemens : Pour cet effet, vous y trouverez-ci annexé un nouveau projet de representation, dont vous ferez part au Comte de Scheffer, en lui disant que nous estimons, que pour mieux être faisie par le Ministère Anglois, elle peut lui être remise par escrit, *toute fois à condition, qu'elle ne soit regardée que comme une insinuation verbale.* Nous ne contesterons point si la Cour de Suede, ou celle de Dannemarc, par des considerations, qui peuvent leur être propres, se servent d'autres termes, ou d'un autre style : Il suffit que le fond des choses soit le même, et que par là le conseil salutaire des trois Souverains s'attire une attention d'autant plus grande de la part des Ministres Anglois.

Les discours et la conduite de ces derniers denotent assez, qu'il n'y a que la crainte d'engager leur patrie dans une guerre avec toute l'Europe, et celle de les exposer à en rendre un compte personnel.

personel, qui puissent les déterminer à entendre à une paix raisonnable. il seroit sans doute utile pour les rendre plus traitables, d'entretenir et de nourrir cette crainte en eux: Il s'offre à cela un moyen aussi efficace que peu dispendieux dans la circonstance où tous les Souverains tiennent prête et armée une partie considerable de leurs forces maritimes; que les escadres Suedoises et Danoises etablissent pour un tems leur croisière au delà du Sund, nous tiendrons de notre côté une escadre dans la Mediterranée et une autre dans la mer glaciale, afin de la mettre à l'exemple de l'année précédente en sûreté contre les armateurs étrangers. Et comme pour féconder ce double équipement, nos escadres, qui ont hiverné l'année dernière à Livourne et à Lisbonne, doivent retourner incessamment, ou retournent déjà en effet dans la Baltique, nous presenterons de cette maniere à la fois un armement très respectable dans différentes mers. La possibilité de la réunion en un seul point les escadres Russe, Suedoise, et Danoise, au premier ordre de leurs Souverains, en imposera sans doute à toutes les puissances belligerantes, et assurera en même tems la naviga-

tion marchande de nos sujets respectifs. Ainsi cette jonction, sans être même effectuée, procurera aux trois Cours un avantage très grand et très reel. En communiquant au Sr. Sacken ce rescript en extrait, nous lui avons enjoint de s'expliquer sur son contenu avec le Ministère Danois, et de nous rendre compte sans delai de ce qui en resultera. Il a ordre de vous en informer directement, afin de gagner par là du tems le plus qu'il sera possible, pour mettre en execution des mesures communes et unanimes qui seront arrêtées entre nous, et nous trouver en etat de munir notre Ministre à Londres d'instructions necessaires, suffisantes ensemble avec celles que nos alliés administreront à leurs Ministres à la même Cour. Nous joignons ici la copie du rescript expédié au dit Sr. Sacken. Vous en ferez part au Ministère Suedois, et vous insisterez auprès de lui pour que sa Cour entre de son côté en communication directe avec celle de Copenhague, afin de gagner également du tems. Comme nous sommes fort éloignés de gêner, dans une cause qui nous est commune, la volonté et les intentions des Rois nos alliés, vous ne manquerez pas

pas sur les ouvertures du Ministre Suedois de discuter avec lui les sentimens propres de sa Cour, et de recevoir *ad referendum* toutes les propositions qui vous seront faites de sa part, en l'assurant d'avance que nous y apporterons tous les égards, et toute la deference qui dépendront de nous.

D d 2

Extrait

(K)

*Extrait d'une Lettre du Comte de Panin au Ministre de
Russie à Copenhague, le Sr. Sacken.*

10, **Q**u' après les ratifications échangées par le Ministre Russe, l'Envoyé de Suede, et le Chargé d'Affaires de Dannemarc, les ordres ont été donnés aux Ministres de l'Imperatrice à Madrid et à Paris, de remettre conjointement avec les Ministres de Dannemarc, de Suede, et d'Hollande, la note dont on est convenu pour déclarer l'accession de la Republique d'Hollande de la même maniere qu'on l'a fait avec les deux conventions de Copenhague et de St Peterfbourg.

20, **Q**UE M. de Simolin a ordre d'exécuter la même commission avec les Ministres de Dannemarc et de Suede, et d'y ajouter ensuite de bouche ou par écrit, si le Ministère Anglois l'exigeoit, qu'à l'occasion de la rupture survenue

survenue entre la Couronne de la Grande Bretagne et la Republique des Provinces Unies, vu que les motifs declarés par la premiere, qui y ont donné lieu sont entierement étrangers, et n'ont rien de commun avec la convention, l'Imperatrice avoit ordonné à son amirauté de regarder la Republique d'Hollande comme une puissance neutre vis-à-vis des deux Cours de Bourbon, et comme belligerante vis-à-vis de celle d'Angleterre, qu'elle est convaincue que cette demarche fera reçue de la Cour d'Angleterre comme une nouvelle preuve de l'impartialité et de l'innocence de son alliance, qui renfermant seulement la protection du commerce et des droits des nations neutres, ni elle ni ses alliés n'ont pas le dessein de la changer en des demarches offensives aussi longtems que ni elle, ni eux, n'y seront forcés par la haine pour leurs principes, et par les tentatives efficaces de les contrecarrer. Que l'Imperatrice ne se flattoit pas moins que la Cour de Londres, par sa bonne volonté à terminer les differends survenus entre elle et une puissance depuis longtems son amie et son alliée, rendra justice à l'amitié de l'Imperatrice pour elle

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elle et éloignera tout soupçon, comme quel parmi les motifs de sa rupture le principal auroit été celui de l'empressement de la République à accéder à l'alliance de la neutralité. Les ordres donnés à l'amirauté Imperiale, en lui communiquant l'acte d'acception de la République, ainsi que l'acte séparé, sont de la teneur suivante.

10, QUE les vaisseaux marchands Hollandois doivent être traités par les escadres, vaisseaux de guerre et fregattes séparés sur le même pied que les vaisseaux Danois et Suedois, selon le contenu de l'ordonnance du 19 Octobre 1780, puisque la République des Provinces Unies est devenue actuellement partie principale et immediate dans tous les droits, prerogatives, et obligations des deux conventions maritimes de Copenhague et de St Peterbourg.

20, QUE cette regle generale a cependant ses exceptions, à l'occasion de la guerre entre la République et la Grande Bretagne, qui l'a attaquée avant la signature de son acte d'acception

sion aux deux conventions en alleguant pour cette rupture des motifs tout à fait étrangers, qui n'ont rien de commun avec cette convention.

3^o, QU'EN considération de cet événement important, ou la neutralité n'existe plus, l'Impératrice ni ses alliés les Rois de Dannemarc et de Suede, ne sont pas obligés de prendre une défense efficace du commerce et de la navigation des Hollandois contre les Anglois.

4^o, QU'EN revanche, cet engagement subsiste dans toute son étendue contre les François et les Espagnols, avec qui les Hollandois ont des conventions et des stipulations détaillées touchant la contrebande, qui doivent aussi naturellement servir de regle pour la conduite des vaisseaux, pour lequel effet on communique à l'amirauté copie de ces conventions, et des autres papiers de mer qui constatent la propriété des vaisseaux Hollandois ; et

3^o, QU'ON

50, Qu'on a communiqué également à l'amirauté pour la connoissance une copie de l'article séparé explicatif conclu entre les Cours de Dannemarc et d'Angleterre.

Precis

aussitôt que la flotte aura pris sa station, de faire des instances fortes et sérieuses auprès de la Cour de Londres, pour qu'elle se declare en conformité avec celles de Versailles et de Madrid ; car il est constant que la Cour de Londres ne vise qu'à eluder les efforts et les plans de la Russie, à gagner du tems, et à profiter d'un moment heureux pour prendre sa revanche. Vous me demandez, Monsieur, pourquoi je pense que l'Imperatrice a de telles vues ? parceque, dis je, la Russie fait mine de vouloir mettre une grande flotte en mer, et qu'une bien mediocre suffit pour garantir la navigation neutre. L'objet en vaut bien la peine, si le dessein est de faire servir l'embaras de l'Angleterre au bien de l'humanité.

4. JE pose que la Grande Bretagne se refusera à ce système d'équité, alors il faut en venir aux menaces, aux demonstrations, aux repressailles, et à tous les moyens desagréables que justifieront des vues aussi benignes que grandes : Jamais je crois qu'ils s'obstineront contre une flotte de 50 vaisseaux.

5. CE

(L)

Precis de la Reponse que son Excellence Monsieur le Comte de Panin a donné au Baron de Nolken, Ministre de Suede, sur les cinq Points d'illucidation qu'il a demandés.

Au premier point, Que la protection doit se donner par tout vaisseau de guerre appartenant à l'une ou à l'autre des puissances liguées à tout vaisseau marchand qui produit des documents clairs et nets de n'avoir à son bord aucune marchandise de contrebande.

Au 2^d point, Que chaque puissance liguée protegera indistinctement le commerce de l'autre ; mais que, pour faciliter cette protection reciproque, on se concertera sur des certains parrages ou stations où les escadres de chaque puissance liguée ayent à se tenir, et qui seront fixées de façon que les escadres puissent former comme une chaine, pour pouvoir en cas de necessité se prêter la main les unes aux autres.

Au 3. Si les escadres viennent à se rencontrer, ils se donneront mutuellement tous les secours d'amitié, et le salut sera donné comme de coutume.

Au 4. C'est le Ministre de la puissance lésée qui doit faire des representations contre les griefs des procedés des armateurs, lesquelles representations seront appuyées de la maniere la plus forte et la plus efficace par les Ministres de toutes les autres puissances.

Au 5. Dans le cas qu'une des puissances liguées de son chef entreprenoit des hostilités, ou alloit se declarer pour quelqu'une des puissances en guerre, elle sera *ipso facto* excluse de la ligue ; si, par contre, quelqu'une des puissances en guerre, par quelque animosité particuliere contre une des puissances liguées, insulteroit son pavillon, ou commettrait des hostilités, on se concertera pour prendre des mesures efficaces à faire respecter ses demarches.

Extrait

rantes, et pour les soutenir S. M. a conclu la convention maritime, signée à Copenhague le 9 Juillet de la même année avec S. M. l'Impératrice de toutes les Russies, dont elle fait ici-la communication avec plaisir à sa Majesté Prussienne.

CES principes étant les seuls capables d'établir la sûreté du commerce et de la navigation des nations neutres, le Roi ne peut que desirer fortement de les voir solennellement reconnus par toutes les puissances de l'Europe, et par un effet de ce desir sentir vivement toute l'importance de les voir adoptés par sa Majesté Prussienne.

RIEN ne seroit ainsi plus conforme au desir de S. M. que d'apprendre qu'il seroit agréable à S. M. Prussienne d'accéder à cette convention, telle qu'elle a été conclue entre les Cours de Dannemarc et de Russie, et en ce cas S. M. porteroit, de son côté, toutes les facilités possibles à s'arranger sur ce qui concerne les stipulations à substituer de la part de sa Majesté Prussienne à celles, que contiennent les articles

cles IV. et V. de cette convention, qui sont ceux qui établissent la protection mutuelle, que les hautes parties contractantes se promettent ; et en déterminant expressément les efforts communs, et les secours reciproques auxquels elles s'engagent, serrent le noeud de cette alliance de la maniere la plus naturelle, en faisant partager à chacune ce qu'il y a d'essentiel dans les obligations, ainsi que dans les avantages de leur union.

JAMAIS objet plus important, ni plus glorieux, n'a été le but d'une alliance, que celui qui étoit l'âme des résolutions de S. M. l'Impératrice de toutes les Russies, lorsqu'elle proposa aux autres puissances du Nord cette convention respectable, qui doit produire un jour le code maritime que cette grande Princesse a promis à l'univers. C'est la conservation des droits les plus chers, les plus précieux à l'humanité, que cette alliance a en vue ; et qui feroit plus capable de les avancer qu'un Souverain d'une sagesse si consommée que S. M. Prussienne, et dont l'influence sur les affaires
de

5. Ce point gagné par un coup imprévu et de vigueur, il ne reste que la rédaction du code maritime qui ne se fera jamais avec plus d'impartialité, que sous les yeux de la Bienfaitrice de l'Europe, et par la direction de son grand Ministre. Le code passera en loi à la pacification. En attendant, une flotte bien moins nombreuse sera suffisante pour veiller sur les Anglois et les Espagnols, et faire que ces deux nations respectent les points de la déclaration. *Je crains les Anglois* ; et l'incertitude de l'avenir. Je ne crois pas aux convois, ni aux forces dispersées ; ni à un concert durable des puissances alliées. Il faut battre le fer pendant qu'il est chaud. L'Imperatrice à la tête, on fait tout, on obtient tout. Ses menaces seules firent la paix de Teschen. Mais s'il y aura question d'un équipement plus grand pour l'année qui vient, je vous prie de faire en sorte que la proposition nous en viendra dans le mois de Novembre.

Note.

(N)

Note.

LE Roi a appris avec la satisfaction la plus parfaite le desir de sa M. Prussienne de prendre une part directe au système bienfaisant de neutralité, dont les principes, puisés dans le droit primitif des nations, se trouvent exposés dans la déclaration de S. M. l'Imperatrice, en date du 28 Février 1780 ; et que, pour contribuer à leur donner une base plus stable, S. M. Prussienne s'est résolue de la garantir par un acte formel, conclu à cet effet avec sa Majesté Imperiale, dont le Roi a reçu la communication amicale, qu'il a plu à sa Majesté Prussienne de lui en faire, avec la reconnoissance la plus sincere.

Pénétré de l'équité et de la justice de ces mêmes principes, le Roi les a établis et réclamés lui même dans la déclaration qu'il a fait remettre le 8 Juillet 1780, aux Cours belligerantes,

de l'Europe est si étendue, et l'amitié si justement recherchée.

C'est-là ce que le Roi a ordonné au soussigné de répondre à la note remise par M. de Bismarck, en date du 15 d'Aout.

Du departement des affaires étrangères du
Roi, à Copenhague le 7 Decembre
1781.

Rosencrone.

F f

Réponse

(O)

*Réponse de la Cour de Suede au Ministre du Roi à Stock-
holm.*

LE Roi ayant eu part de l'acte passé le 8 du May de la presente année, entre les Cours de St Petersbourg et de Berlin, a senti, avec une satisfaction extrême, combien le système bien-faisant de la navigation et du commerce des nations neutres alloit gagner de l'affermissement par les liens que S. M. Prussienne venoit de contracter, et par lesquels elle s'engage au maintien des principes qui ont déjà été adoptés, et généralement annoncés de la part du Roi et de ses alliés.

SA Majesté n'a pas eu moins de satisfaction, en apprenant que Sa Majesté Prussienne étoit dans l'intention d'étendre ces mêmes engagements, en les rendant communs avec ceux de sa Majesté ; et comme on ne fauroit rien ajouter

ter à la convention maritime qui a été conclue à St Peterbourg le 21 Juillet, 1 d'Aout, de l'année passée entre les Cours de Suede et de Russie, S. M. seroit très aise s'il plaisoit à S. M. Prussienne d'accéder à la dite convention ; au quel cas S. M. porteroit de son côté toutes les facilités possibles à s'arranger sur ce qui concerne les stipulations à substituer de la part de S. M. Prussienne à celles que contiennent les articles 4. 5. de cette convention, ce sont ceux qui établissent la protection mutuelle que les alliés se promettent ; et les noeuds de cette alliance ne sauroient être plus fortement reserrés qu'en déterminant expressément les secours reciproques auxquels les hautes parties contractantes s'engagent, et en faisant ainsi partager à chacune, ce qu'il y a d'essentiel dans les obligations ainsi que dans les avantages de leur union.

Si la conservation des droits les plus chers, et les plus précieux de l'humanité a fait l'unique objet des conventions conclues entre les puissances du Nord, si elles croient necessaire de donner tous leurs soins à l'établissement d'un

code maritime, qui fixera à l'avenir ces droits, en faveur de toutes les nations neutres, rien ne peut être plus conforme à des vues si grandes, si glorieuses, que lorsque S. M. Prussienne y emploiera également l'influence, qu'elle s'est acquise à si juste titre dans les affaires de l'Europe, rien ne peut être plus conforme aux desirs du Roi que de multiplier les liens, qui l'attachent déjà à S. M. Prussienne. C'est ce que le soussigné a eu ordre de répondre à la note remise par M. le Baron de Keller, en date du 20 d'Avril de cette année.

Fait à Stockholm ce 5 Decembre 1781.

Copie

(P)

*Copie de la Note remise au Baron de Keller par S. M.
Monsieur le Comte de Scheffer, le 2 de May 1782.*

LE Roi en accordant l'année passée aux sujets commerçants de S. M. Prussienne la protection que ce Monarque temoignoit desirer pour la sureté de leur commerce et navigation, avoit dès lors saisi, avec une véritable satisfaction, cette occasion pour prouver en même tems, et son attachement aux principes sur la navigation libre des neutres, qu'il a constamment suivis, et les sentimens personnels de considération et d'amitié pour S. M. le Roi de Prusse. Ensuite S. M. ayant été invité d'accéder à l'acte passé à St Petersbourg le 8 May 1781, entre S. M. Prussienne et S. M. l'Imperatrice de Russie, il ne pouvoit être question, que de choisir la maniere la plus simple et la plus naturelle aux liens que S. M. alloit contracter. Et en consequence, le Roi fit proposer à sa Majesté le Roi de Prusse d'accéder à la convention

vention maritime conclue précédemment et dès l'année 1780, entre le Roi et S. M. l'Impératrice de Russie, en observant ce que la position différente des deux Royaumes pouvoit exiger de différent dans les engagements à prendre.

MAIS S. M. le Roi de Prusse ayant fait connoître dans une seconde note remise au soussigné par son Envoyé Extraordinaire, M. le Baron de Keller, qu'elle desiroit pour des raisons y alleguées, préférablement à tout, que le Roi y accedât à l'acte sus-mentionné du 8 May 1781. S. M. a cru ne devoir plus consulter que son amitié pour sa dite Majesté, ainsi que l'avantage qui doit résulter pour le système de la liberté du commerce des neutres, par le concours d'un Prince dont le crédit et la considération sont si universellement établis. Et en conséquence, le Roi a ordonné au soussigné de faire part à M. le Baron de Keller, en réponse à sa note du 23 du mois de Février, que le Roi a résolu de se prêter aux desirs de S. M. Prussienne. En conformité de quoi il doit également informer M. le Baron de Keller,

que

que le Baron de Nolken, Envoyé Extraordinaire du Roi à la Cour de Peterfbourg, recevra inceffamment ordre d'accéder par des déclarations formelles de S. M. à l'acte conclu en cette ville le 8 May de l'année paffée ; et par une fuite de la confiance et de l'amitié qui fubfiftent entre les deux Cours, le fousigné a l'honneur de joindre ici des copies des déclarations que le Baron de Nolken fera chargé de remettre d'une part au Miniftère de S. M. I. de toutes les Rufies ; et, de l'autre, à M. le Comte de Goertz, Envoyé Extraordinaire de S. M. Pruffienne refidant à la dite Cour ; s'attendant que de part et d'autre on remettra au dit Baron de Nolken les actes d'acceptation qui feront trouvés neceffaires pour porter cet ouvrage fi falutaire à fa perfection.

S. M. éprouve un plaifir d'autant plus parfait à remplir en cette occafion les defirs du Roi fon oncle, qu'elle efpere que ce nouveau noeud contribuera à reflerrer les liens de l'amitié qui uniffent déjà par tant de titres les deux Souverains.

Projet

(Q)

Projet de Declaration servant d'Acte d'Accession au Traité conclu à S. Peterbourg entre sa Majesté le Roi de Prusse et sa Majesté l'Imperatrice de toutes les Russies, le 8 May 1781.

CHRISTIAN Sept, par la grace de Dieu, Roi de Dannemarc et de Norvege, &c. &c. favoir faisons, Qu'ayant eu à coeur depuis le commencement de la presente guerre maritime de maintenir la liberté du commerce et de la navigation, et nous étant toujours serieusement occupés d'un projet aussi salutaire, tant en accordant une protection efficace au commerce de nos sujets, qu'en formant avec plusieurs autres puissances neutres animées des mêmes sentimens que nous, des engagements tendants à établir la liberté des mers fondée dans le droit des gens et des nations ; nous n'avons pu apprendre qu'avec un véritable plaisir le desir que sa Majesté le Roi de Prusse a marqué de contribuer à l'affermissement d'un ouvrage
aussi

aussi glorieux qu'utile à toute l'Europe. Notre satisfaction a été d'autant plus parfaite, que nous avons vu par la communication amicale, qui nous a été faite de l'acte passé entre S. M. le Roi de Prusse et S. M. l'Imperatrice de toutes les Russies, le 8 May de l'année 1781, pour le maintien de la liberté du commerce et de la navigation neutre, que les principes, sur lesquels cet acte est fondé, sont à tous égards entièrement conformes à ceux que nous avons précédemment établis, tant par la convention conclue entre nous et l'Imperatrice de Russie à Copenhague, le 9 Juillet de l'année 1780, que par notre accession aux traités signés séparément par cette Souveraine avec S. M. le Roi de Suede et les Etats Generaux des Provinces Unies, en date du 21 Juillet et du 4 Novembre, 1780.

C'EST par une suite de ces mêmes sentimens, ainsi que de notre amitié constante et inviolable pour S. M. le Roi de Prusse, qu'ayant été invités d'accéder, comme partie principale contractante, au sus-dit acte, Nous déclarons et certifions par cette presente, comme quoi,

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Nous

Nous accedons dans la meilleure forme comme partie principale contractante à l'acte conclu à St Petersburg le 8 May 1781 ; et Nous nous engageons pour nous et nos successeurs à toutes les stipulations contenues dans les clauses et articles, ainsi que dans les quatre articles séparés, qui s'y trouvent joints, et auxquels nous accedons également dans toute leur forme et teneur : Voulant et étendant, par ce notre acte d'accession et d'acceptation formelle, nous tenir engagés à défendre et à soutenir la liberté et la sûreté du commerce licite des sujets de S. M. le Roi de Prusse dans la même étendue, dont nous soutenons et défendons celui de nos propres sujets.

Nous entendons en outre, dans le cas ou quelque' une des parties contractantes se verroit exposée à des violences, ou autres inconvenients, en haine du sus-dit acte, et de notre presente accession, ou par une suite des principes contraires à ceux y etablis, que nous nous concerterons incessamment ; et que nous choisirons, conjointement avec le Roi de Prusse, de même que nous nous sommes déjà engagés de

de le faire avec les autres puissances participantes dans le système de la liberté du commerce et de la navigation des neutres, les moyens les plus surs et les plus analogues à la position de nos royaumes, afin d'obtenir à la partie lésée la justice et la satisfaction qui lui seront dues.

FINALEMENT, nous attendons que S. M. le Roi de Prusse déclarera également, par un acte formel, avoir reçu et accepté notre présente déclaration, nous reconnoissant ainsi comme partie principale contractante relativement au sus-dit acte du 8 May 1781; et qu'elle promettra de remplir pleinement, et en tous points à notre égard tous les engagements que nous venons de contracter par cette présente notre déclaration. En foi de quoi, &c.

(R)

Memoire de S. M. le Roi de Suede envoyé directement avec une Lettre particuliere à S. M. l'Imperatrice.

Si les liens que le Roi a eu la satisfaction de former avec sa Majesté l'Imperatrice de Russie, pendant le cours de la presente guerre, pour le soutien de la cause des neutres, ne peuvent lui être qu'infiniment chers pour les avantages zelés et permanents que cette association doit produire pour toutes les nations, et par l'honneur de partager avec cette Souveraine la gloire qui lui en resultera à si juste titre ; ces mêmes liens ne sont pas moins précieux à sa Majesté, par les occasions qu'ils lui fournissent de donner à S. M. l'Imperatrice de Russie, et de recevoir de sa part des marques de cette confiance entiere, suite de l'intimité qui regne entre les deux Souverains, autant que du parfait accord de leurs intérêts mutuels. Le Roi en a reçu une nouvelle preuve par l'amitié que S. M. lui a faite de le consulter sur le parti

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ti à prendre à l'égard de la Republique d'Hollande, dans la supposition qu'elle continueroit à decliner toute paix particuliere avec l'Angleterre, quand même cette derniere puissance pourroit etre engagée à en poser la base sur les principes de la neutralité armée, avoués et reconnus vis-à-vis de toutes les puissances neutres. Sa Majesté ne croit pas pouvoir mieux marquer sa reconnoissance d'une confiance, à laquelle il a été si sensible, qu'en y répondant avec toute la sincerité que la veritable amitié exige, et qu'elle seule fait inspirer.

L'EUROPE entiere a reconnu dans les demarches que S. M. I. a faites depuis la rupture de l'Angleterre avec la Hollande pour retablir la paix entre ces deux puissances, les sentimens qui animent toutes les actions de cette Souveraine, son desir de procurer le bien de l'humanité en general, et celui de ses alliés en particulier. Le Roi a suivi ces demarches, et y a applaudi avec l'interêt qu'il prend toujours à tout ce qui touche la gloire de l'Impératrice. Il a été persuadé que S. M. Imperiale envisageant l'état et la situation de la Republique

publique d'Hollande, a trouvé dans ce coup d'oeil sûr, avec lequel elle fait apprécier les choses, de nouvelles raisons qui auront augmenté le desir que la bonté de son coeur lui avoit inspirées, de travailler à une paix utile à l'Angleterre, mais nécessaire à la Hollande. En effet il ne falloit que jetter les yeux sur la situation dans laquelle se trouvoit cette Republique avant que l'Angleterre declarât la guerre pour se convaincre combien cet événement lui étoit desavantageux et pourroit lui devenir fatal en son état florissant, son commerce étendu et lucratif, fruits d'une longue paix, autant que de son industrie naturelle ; tout en un mot rendoit la guerre redoutable à une Republique independante et jouissante des avantages qui lui étoient réservés dans les traités de commerce subsistans entre elle et les puissances beligerantes ; et dans cet état la rupture avec l'Angleterre étoit un véritable malheur pour la Republique ; et il semble que le peu de solidité des raisons qui le lui attirerent, sert encore à la rendre plus intéressante. On ne peut se dissimuler que le simple projet d'un traité de commerce, traité qui presupposoit nécessairement

fairement l'indépendance des Etats de l'Amerique reconnue par l'Angleterre, puis qu'il ne pouvoit jamais avant cette époque fortir son effet, est une raison bien foible pour rompre avec un ancien ami et allié; pesée par une posterité equitable, elle ne paroitra qu'un pretexte pour couvrir le mecontentement d'une nation rivale par son commerce, et d'un Ministre accoutumé à se laisser entrainer à des mouvements impetueux. Ces verités pouvoient aussi peu echapper aux yeux eclairés de S. M. I. qu'elles ne pouvoient manquer d'interessier son coeur; aussi son premier mouvement fut de s'occuper à prevenir les maux dont la Republique étoit menacée en lui procurant une prompte paix. Ce fut un nouveau malheur pour la Hollande que l'Angleterre ne voulût point alors se prêter aux soins genereux de l'Imperatrice, et si la Republique se vit par là frustrée des effets de cette bienveillance, tout ce qui est arrivé depuis ne doit pas moins servir à lui prouver que les intentions de S. M. Imperiale en sa faveur l'engagent, à une reconnoissance eternelle. Il est effectivement

effectivement difficile d'imaginer un changement plus fatal que celui qu'a porté à la situation de cette Republique, une guerre d'une aussi courte durée. A la perte d'un commerce immense sa seule force, sa principale ressource, elle a vu joindre celle d'une pêche considerable qui seule lui valoit une mine d'or. Ses colonies en Amerique ont été envahies, et on ignore même entre les mains de quelle puissance elles peuvent actuellement être passées. La plupart de ses possessions dans les Grandes Indes, acquises et conservées avec tant de dépenses et tant de soins, sont perdues pour elle. Enfin, pour comble elle se voit bloquée la plus grande partie de l'année dans ses propres ports, et ses vaisseaux empêchés d'y entrer ou d'en sortir. L'effet naturel de tous ces malheurs accumulés a été d'entraîner la Republique dans la nécessité de se lier plus étroitement avec la France contre un ennemi commun et à serrer des noeuds qui seuls peuvent faire la ressource pendant la guerre, et doivent procurer sa sûreté à la paix. Elle s'est vu forcée de se jeter si entierement dans les bras de
cette

cette puissance que peu s'en faut qu'elle ne se trouve dans sa dependance, et la demolition des places appellées *de barriere* a achevé un systeme que la necessité de la guerre avoit commencé. Ainsi, par une suite de circonstances fâcheuses, la Republique se trouve à present presque hors d'état de pouvoir accepter les bienfaits que S. M. Imperiale n'a cessé de lui offrir, et dont son ennemi l'a empêchée de profiter dans le tems où elle le pouvoit encore. En supposant cependant qu'il seroit possible de vaincre les obstacles qui s'opposent maintenant à une paix séparée entre l'Angleterre et la Hollande, il deviendrait alors du ressort de l'Imperatrice, comme mediatrice entre les deux puissances, de peser sur la balance de son equité naturelle, si la Republique doit faire la paix sans être replacée à peu près dans le même état où elle étoit avant la guerre sans avoir été remise en possession de ses colonies et de ses comptoirs dans les deux Indes, et sans avoir reçu quelque dedomagement des pertes immenses que la cessation seule de son commerce lui a causées. L'Angleterre il est vrai

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propose

propose le retablissement du traité de 1674. Elle offre même de reconnoître vis-à-vis de la Republique les principes adoptés par les puissances du Nord ; et ce dernier offre sans doute un prejugué favorable à l'egard de ces puissances, mais il n'est pas encore avoué generalement, et de plus s'il l'etoit, cela fust-il pour les Hollandois ? C'est un point sur lequel le Roi suspend entierement son opinion. Il n'est point chargé de leur cause, et il ne s'agit point ici de la plaider. Tout ce que S. M. veut en induire, c'est que la paix particuliere entre l'Angleterre et la Hollande sera sans comparaison plus difficile à amener à present, qu'elle ne l'etoit d'abord après la rupture, c'est à dire, dans le tems où l'Imperatrice fit ses premieres offres de mediation.

LE Roi apperçoit avec chagrin les obstacles qui s'opposent au dessein glorieux que l'amour de l'humanité, et de la bienfaisance inspira à cette Princesse, et une juste reconnoissance pour la confiance qu'elle lui a temoignée, l'oblige autant que son amitié de presenter à S. M.

Imperiale

Imperiale ces obstacles dans le même jour, où il les voit lui même ; mais en même tems S. M. trouve avec d'autant plus de plaisir dans les sentimens connus, et les bons offices déjà offerts par l'Imperatrice pour la pacification generale ainsi que dans l'association des puissances du Nord, un moyen de parvenir entierement dans les circonstances presentes au but plein de gloire que S. M. I. et ses alliés se sont proposé, et par l'une et par l'autre de ces démarches le Roi éprouve une véritable satisfaction de dévoiler ses sentimens sur ces objets à S. M. l'Imperatrice avec la confiance que lui inspire également ses grandes lumieres, et son amitié parfaite si précieuse pour sa Majesté.

IL est evident, que depuis le changement effectué le printems passé, dans le Ministère Anglois les affaires s'acheminent à grands pas vers une pacification generale. La France et l'Angleterre également fatiguées toutes deux d'une guerre couteuse, se voyant arrêtées par la circonstance de l'indépendance de l'Amerique, objet que la premiere croit devoir exi-

ger, et que le Ministère qui gouvernoit la seconde s'opiniâtroit à refuser, mais cet obstacle principal paroissant être levé par les sentimens qu'a annoncé le Ministère suivant, et que celui d'aujourd'hui semble également avoir adopté, on a bientôt vu une négociation directe s'ouvrir à Paris. Il est vrai que les fraix déjà faits de la campagne presente, le desir d'en voir l'issue, et les interêts des alliés de la France surtout l'Espagne arrêteront probablement pour le moment le prompt effet de cette négociation mais la campagne finie il est très fort à presumer que les affaires pourront bientôt s'arranger d'autant plus que l'expédition que l'Espagne va entreprendre contre Gibraltar doit vers ce tems avoir réussi ou manqué.

DANS cet etat des choses, il paroît moins à craindre que les puissances belligerantes se refusent à une pacification, qu'il n'est à redouter qu'elles ne terminent d'elles mêmes, et sans l'intervention de qui que ce soit leurs différends. Il est clair combien une paix pareille peut devenir prejudiciable à la cause des neutres,

neutres, cause que S. M. Imperiale conjointement avec le Roi et ses autres alliés, a soutenu avec tant de gloire et jusqu' ici avec tant de succès. On ne peut pas se dissimuler que l'Angleterre n'a jamais approuvé cordialement les principes adoptés dans la convention de la neutralité armée ; et si la Maison de Bourbon y a paru moins contrainte, cet objet lui est cependant trop étranger pour qu'on puisse attendre qu'elle s'en occupera essentiellement à une paix, où elle aura tant d'intérêts à menager, qui la touchent infiniment plus près.

IL semble par conséquent que tout invite dans ce moment S. M. l'Imperatrice de Russie et ses alliés à couronner par une demarche, qu'on peut esperer sera decisive, les nobles et glorieux efforts qu'ils n'ont pas cessé de faire pour etablir les droits des neutres sur une base solide et immuable. A cet effet le Roi expose aux vues éclairées de l'Imperatrice l'avis dont il est, que le seul moyen efficace pour parvenir à ce but seroit que S. M. I. conjointement avec tous les allies qui ont pris part à

la convention maritime propoſſaſſent aux puifſances belligerantes d'établir un congrès dans lequel on diſcuteroit et termineroit les différens intérêts tant des puifſances en guerre, que des Etats neutres. L'Empereur des Romains ayant partagé juſqu' ici les ſoins que S. M. l'Imperatrice s'eſt donnés pour la pacification generale et étant d'ailleurs lié aux intérêts des puifſances maritimes aſſociées pour le maintien de la liberté du commerce, par les engagemens que ce Prince a pris à cet egard avec l'Imperatrice, recevra certainement avec joye la propoſition que cette Souveraine lui feroit de ſe joindre dans une pareille demarche aux puifſances du Nord. Sa mediation déjà offerte, ſa puifſance et ſon credit auprès des différens Etats en guerre, ne peuvent que donner un très grand poids aux representations qu'il leur feroit, et accélérer la reuſſite de deux objets qu'on ſe propoſe par un congrès, ſavoir, la pacification et l'établifſement d'un code maritime. A la même fin, le Roi laiſſe à décider à S. M. l'Imperatrice s'il ne feroit pas à propos qu'elle employât ſon credit au-
près

près du Roi de Prusse pour engager ce Prince d'épouser avec toute la chaleur, que l'importance de la chose exige les intérêts de la cause commune. Ce ne feroit qu'une suite des mêmes principes, qui lui ont fait desirer d'entrer dans l'association des puissances maritimes, et ses grandes qualités personnelles, ainsi que la considération qu'elle lui ont méritées, rendront toujours les démarches qu'il fera efficacement utiles au bien general.

IL est facile de prévoir quel effet une impulsion donnée en même tems, et à la fois par les Etats les plus puissants de l'Europe, ne pourra manquer de faire sur les puissances beligerantes. Cette impression sera d'autant plus forte, que ces puissances sentiront bientôt que ce qu'on leur propose n'est nullement contraire à leur intérêt, et ne peut en aucune façon y nuire. Au contraire, le congrès projeté semble devoir convenir à tout le monde. Les Plenipotentiaires des Etats en guerre, se trouvant tous rassemblés en un même lieu y discuteront et termineront avec plus de facilité

té les differends de leurs Cours. Si quelque Cour neutre étoit reçue pour remplir l'office de mediateur entre quelques unes des puissances belligerantes, ou entre elles en general, cette Cour fera de son mieux pour remplir sa tâche. Les autres veilleront à leur cause, et on parviendra par ce moyen au double avantage, et d'établir une paix solide, et de constater les loix maritimes avec le même éclat et la même fureté que l'on a fixé celles de l'Empire Germanique par les traités de Westphalie ; et par là on se trouvera enfin au but que S. M. l'Imperatrice et ses alliés dans la convention maritime ont toujours eu en vue, et vers lequel toutes leurs demarches ont constamment été dirigées, et on terminera l'ouvrage glorieux et utile qui servira de matiere à la reconnaissance des siècles à venir.

IL est clair, que pour parvenir à une paix generale et solide dans les circonstances presentes, les plenipotentiaires des Etats Unis de l'Amerique doivent etre appellés au congrès ; mais cet article ne peut causer aucune
difficulté,

difficulté, l'Angleterre ne devant plus avoir de repugnance à traiter avec eux après que les Ministres Britanniques ont déclaré hautement contre l'opiniâtreté de l'ancien Ministère à vouloir réduire l'Amerique Septentrionale, et que ceux qui sont à présent en place déclarent qu'ils ne s'opposeront point à reconnoître son independance.

Si le plan que le Roi vient de proposer est adopté, il ne restera qu'à déterminer les termes dans lesquels les propositions à faire doivent être conçues, et il sera aisé d'en convenir et d'instruire en consequence les Ministres résidans près des Cours belligerantes. Le Roi pense qu'on ne sauroit donner trop de poids à ces propositions, et qu'ainsi il seroit essentiel qu'elles soyent faites en même tems à chacune de ces Cours par les Ministres de toutes les puissances qui co-opèrèrent à cet ouvrage. Il sera encore facile de convenir du lieu à proposer pour la tenue du congrès. Aix la Chapelle, Mayence, Francfort, ou quelque autre ville Imperiale libre, la plus à portée qu'il

soit possible, pour tous ceux qui y auront à faire, remplira l'objet.

LE Roi attend avec intérêt les sentimens de S. M. l'Impératrice sur le plan qu'il vient de mettre sous ses yeux ; mais quels qu'ils soyent, S. M. est persuadée que l'Imperatrice ne pourra qu'y reconnoître sa tendre amitié, sa confiance parfaite, son amour pour leur gloire mutuelle, et sa fermeté invariable dans les principes qu'il se fait un honneur d'avoir suivis constamment avec sa Majesté Imperiale.

Fait à Drottningholm, ce 7 Aout 1782.

Note

(S)

*Note pour Monsieur le Baron d'Albedyll, Chargé des
Affaires de sa Majesté le Roi de Suede.*

L'IMPERATRICE a été très sensible à la confiance et à la cordialité avec laquelle S. M. le Roi de Suede dans la note nouvellement remise par son Chargé d'Affaires s'est expliqué vis-à-vis d'elle sur la presente situation de l'Europe

SA Majesté, convaincue comme elle est qu'il n'y a rien à ajouter aux reflexions judicieuses et au choix des moyens proposés par le Roi relativement au grand but d'une pacification generale, et a l'affermissement du systeme de neutralité heureusement établi par leurs efforts reunis, peut assurer S. M. Suedoise qu'il n'en a rien échappé à son attention.

L'IMPERATRICE s'est occupée jusqu' à present de concert avec S. M. l'Empereur des
Romains,

Romains, son co-mediateur, et par l'accession aux mêmes principes, le co-partageant, de la tâche essentielle de protéger les droits des neutres ; et elle n'omettra certainement rien lors de la conclusion d'une paix generale entre toutes les puissances belligerantes, à concilier au dit systéme une force et durée permanente, et à le faire passer, par l'aveu et l'accession des mêmes puissances, en loi generale pour toutes les nations.

Au reste, les sentimens zelés du Roi en faveur des mêmes interêts, son impartialité, sa pénétration, qui sont si bien connues à l'Imperatrice ne permettent point à S. Majeste de douter, qu'en tems et lieu S. M. Suedoise ne veuille co-operer de son mieux pour l'avancement de cette cause commune, et pour en acheminer une issue bonne et heureuse.

Fait à St Peteribourg ce 7 Septembre
1782.

FINIS.

